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THE NEWSPAPER FOR SITTINGBOURNE, ISLE OF SHEPPEY, FAVERSHAM & DISTRICT



Issue No 117
Available from Wednesday,
December 9, 2009

JOB...

Helping you make
the right choice

PAGES 34-36



MOTORING...

Outlander firms
up its response

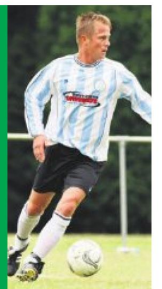
PAGES 31-32



SPORT...

Round-up of all
the local action

PAGES 38-39



IT'S CUTBACKS OR COUNCIL TAX RISE

WHAT'S ON & WATCH

yourkenttv.co.uk



BY DEGREES: Girne American University opens
new faculty in the county. Search 'GAU'

ALSO INSIDE

COMPETITION PAGE 15
LETTERS PAGES 16-17
LEISURE PAGES 18-25
PROPERTY PAGE 27-30

ISSN 1753-123-3



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BACK FROM THE DEAD

Buzzing quietly among the dragonflies and damselflies patrolling the freshwater ditches at Elmley Marsh is the 'extinct' scarce emerald damselfly (*L. dryas*).

The metallic green insect was declared extinct in 1980, but has survived on the Sheppey marshes. Unlike most damselflies, it usually rests with its wings half open. Once mature, the male and female develop different colouration. Males have bright blue eyes and a powder blue colour on the thorax and segments of the abdomen while females tend to be a much subtler green, making them difficult to spot.

BY JILL HURST

ACCEPT an increase in council tax or lose services – that is the ultimatum from Swale council as it tries to plug a £5 million hole in the borough's finances.

Budget plans due to go before the full council this evening propose an initial £1.6m cut in services next year and council leader Cllr Andrew Bowles warned more jobs and services will go unless council tax was raised.

He said: "Although our aim is to impose the lowest possible increase, one per cent of council tax equates to £70,000 in revenue. If we don't increase the current rate to 4.95 per cent we will have to find another £175,000 and this will only be achieved through service cuts or efficiency gains."

Educational projects see a loss of £50,000 and £70,000 will be sliced from the council's successful rent deposit scheme.

Other cuts will see the downgrading of car park maintenance, sports development projects and the upkeep of seafronts across the region.

Additionally almost £200,000 will be wiped off the housing benefit and council tax budget, resulting in the closure of the Faversham district office and forcing residents to travel to Sittingbourne.

Cllr Bowles said there was still time for people to have their say: "It is important that everyone engages and I appeal to the community to have their say. However, while nothing is set in stone, if a service is reinstated another

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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1 Canterbury's pantomime with a difference this year is in the new Marlowe Arena. See behind the scenes...



2 Meet Young Ones anti-hero Ade Edmondson who plays Captain Hook in Peter Pan at Yourkenttv.co.uk



3 And see Canterbury pantomime hero Dave Lee is not a dame this year - he plays Tinkerbell. Search 'Peter Pan'

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High-speed rail fares concern commuters

BY JILL HURST

THE high-speed train service to the capital has received mixed reviews as it prepares to switch to a full timetable this weekend.

As passengers across Kent access London in record times, many Faversham and Sittingbourne commuters are feeling short-changed.

Swale council leader Andrew Bowles said the cost of using the high-speed service would make it inaccessible to many in the community. He said: "If it's going to cost substantially more, people will be less inclined to use it and it doesn't appear to present a huge advantage to residents."

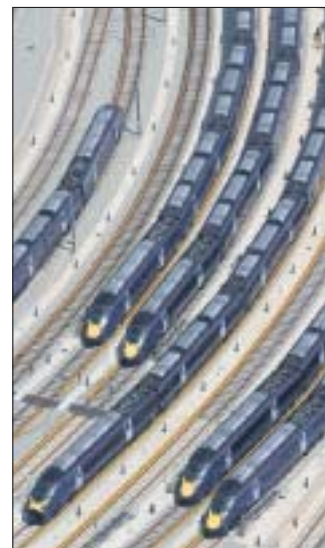
The full timetable will roll out on December 13 and passengers travelling from Ashford International will enjoy a 140mph bullet service and a journey time of 37 minutes - cut from one hour 20 minutes.

However, commuters from Faversham and Sittingbourne will see a maximum reduction in travelling time of 20 minutes and will be charged a 15 per cent premium for a journey that will still take more than an hour to complete.

High-speed commuters from Faversham to London can expect to pay £41.90 for a daily peak-time return whilst those leaving from Sittingbourne will pay £36.40. This compares with current prices of £35.90 and £31 respectively.

Some customers are now fearful that existing services to Victoria and Cannon Street will be axed in favour of the new service.

Office worker Christine Brown travels to her job in the city each day. She said: "The worry is that existing services between Faversham and London will be reduced or more stops will be included in the journey caus-



Picture: AK Pictures

TAKING THE STRAIN: High-speed trains to London wait in sidings at the Ashford depot

ing overcrowding and forcing us to use the high-speed trains."

MP Hugh Robertson said he believed the service would benefit the region. He said: "The key priority for Faversham's existing rail users is to preserve the existing classic service. The new high-speed trains will be an exciting addition to that service and may also encourage more people to visit and spend money in the town."

"However, this will only happen if the fare structure encourages people to use the new service."

"SouthEastern is extremely receptive to maintaining the full existing service to Victoria and Cannon Street, particularly during peak times."

To view the full timetable, visit www.southeasternrailway.co.uk or call 0845 000 2222.

Council proposes new budget plans

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE
will have to go."

The council plans to generate income by increasing taxi licence fees and bringing in brown waste bin charges.

The plan will also see community safety services such as town centre CCTV control relocated to Medway.

Labour leader Cllr Roger Truelove said the council was feeling the effects of 10 years of short-term thinking.

He said: "This sort of planning should have happened years ago, when foolish decisions were made for short-term political thinking."

But Cllr Bowles claimed the community would be sympathetic.

"The man in the street appreciates how difficult this process is."

The proposed budget will be submitted to a meeting of the full council today from 7pm at Swale House, Sittingbourne.

Swale council can be contacted on 01795 417850.

yoursware

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gang rob man in town centre attack

FOUR thugs launched a vicious attack on a man in Faversham.

One of the gang punched the man in the head and stole money after he refused to hand over cash. He was walking through the alley leading to Cross Lane on November 29 at 3pm.

Police are keen to talk to a man aged 20 to 25 with short hair who was wearing a black jacket.

Anyone with information should contact Faversham police on 01795 419161 or CrimeStoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Firefighters rescue horse trapped in box

EMERGENCY services had to rescue a horse after it became trapped in the horse box it was travelling in.

The doors of the trailer seized and the owner was unable to release the young Gelding in Bull Lane, Newington, on December 5.

Firefighters rescued the horse using hand tools and hydraulic openers.




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Wife saw husband die in CCTV suicide blaze

■ BY JILL HURST

A WIDOW told an inquest how she watched her husband as he set himself alight in his car.

Mrs Teresa Macklin described how her 44-year-old husband, Gary John Macklin, stormed off after she refused to take him back following their separation. Mr Macklin, who was on bail for domestic abuse charges at the time of his death, returned a few minutes later and killed himself.

The 46-year-old company director said: "I just had enough. I couldn't cope anymore. He said he was going to get help for his drinking.

"He kept asking for a fresh start but it was always like that. It would be ok for a month and then it would go back to how it was. He'd get drunk and start smashing things up after coming home from the pub."

Abusive

Mrs Macklin, of Raspberry Hill Lane, Iwade, told the court how her husband, also a company director, had come to the house early on the morning of July 23 to ask for a reconciliation only to become abusive when she turned him down.

She said: "He threw a cup of tea against the kitchen wall and shouted at me before storming out and driving away in his car only to return a few minutes later.

"A text came through on my phone and I knew it would be him so I ignored it, but then he telephoned. I could see him in his car on



SCENE OF TRAGEDY: House where Gary John Macklin set himself alight (circled) in his car as his wife watched on CCTV

the CCTV. I answered the phone and he told me that if I wanted to see him for the last time to come to the front gate.

"As I looked up to the monitor I heard a bang and saw smoke. I rang the emergency services and then ran outside."

Detective superintendent Stuart Samson said he was aware of the domestic abuse but was satisfied no other person was involved in the fire.

He said: "CCTV footage shows a very clear

chain of events. Emergency crews were called at 8.24am. If a second person had left the car or been involved they would have clearly been seen on the tape."

The coroner ruled Mr Macklin, who had a history of self-harm, took his own life and died from severe burns and smoke inhalation. He said although his blood alcohol levels were twice over the drink-drive limit there was no indication that this had played a part in his death.

Woman duped in car-park scam

SHOPPERS are being warned about distraction scams after a woman was robbed in a shopping centre car park.

The 61-year-old victim got out of her car to help a motorist who had asked her for directions to Tunbridge Wells.

The male driver prevented her from reversing out and beckoned for help with a fold-out map. On returning to her vehicle she discovered a large quantity of cash had been stolen from her purse.

The man is described as a stocky Iranian with very short dark hair. He is thought to be about 40-years-old and was wearing a dark cardigan and light shirt.

Anyone with information should contact Sittingbourne police on 01795 419182 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Heartless thieves steal festive cash

CALLOUS thieves stole donation money at the Christmas lights switch-on in Foxley Road, Queenborough at the weekend.

Cash was collected in an aluminium beer barrel which had been secured to a driveway with a padlock. Thieves used bolt-cutters to make off with the money.

The 10th anniversary of the yearly event took place on December 5 and was attended by 500 members of the community, who looked on as all 64 houses in the street turned on their Christmas lights.

Police spokesman David Applegate said it was a despicable crime targeted at a community who had come together in the spirit of Christmas.

Anyone with information should contact Swale police on 01795 419182.

'Coward' who beat OAP is sentenced

A "COWARD" who preyed on an elderly Sittingbourne woman showed "no remorse" as he was sentenced to nine years in prison.

Alfred Rossiter, pictured, from Swanley, posed as an odd-job man and offered to help Janet Hodges in her garden on September 17, 2008. Aided by an accomplice, the 40-year-old entered her house and stole £100.



Rossiter returned late at night on October 2 when Mrs Hodges, of College Road, was in bed. When she opened the front door he forced his way in to demand money.

The 74-year-old fought back but was overpowered and repeatedly beaten about the head by the thug who made off with £3,000.

Both men appeared at Maidstone Crown Court on Tuesday December 1. Tom Scott, 39, from Cambridgeshire pleaded guilty to burglary and was sentenced to nine months imprisonment. Ian Clark, 40, from Cambridgeshire was charged with burglary and dangerous driving. He was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment and disqualified from driving for 15 months.

Council raking in £2 million a year in parking revenue

SWALE council has been accused of using drivers as a "cash cow" after they raked in almost £2 million in parking revenue.

A Freedom of Information request revealed the council collected £1,699,957 from parking services during the last financial year, representing an increase of almost £155,000 over three years.

Pressure group the TaxPayers' Alliance (TPA) said parking charges are simply a "cash cow" for councils and an alternative way to raise their budgets.

TPA spokesman Jennifer Dunn said: "The total revenue generated through parking reveals it is a lucrative source of income for Swale council. Across the UK, councils have doubled council tax in the last 10 years but have imposed a heavy and unfair burden on ordinary taxpayers, especially drivers.

"Councils should try to keep charges low to attract shoppers and tourists who are essential to local economies.

AA boss Edmund King added: "Local authorities should see parking as a community service rather than a cash register."

Figures released by Swale council confirmed parking revenue increased from £1,546,834 in 2007 to £1,626,169 the following year peaking at £1,699,957 in 2008/2009.

Officials refused to disclose expected parking revenue for the years ahead but residents using Central and Queens Hall car parks in Faversham and Albion Place car park in Sheerness will see permit prices increase from £15.50 to £20 in 2010.

Swale council head of amenities Brian Planner said the increase in revenue could be attributed to the rise in inflation and the increased use of car parks.

He added: "The majority of the overall income is used to cover operational costs and the balance contributes to the upkeep of the car parks and keeps down the cost of everyone's council tax."



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NEWS IN BRIEF

Time for climate action

A CLIMATE change officer is appealing for everyone to do their bit and send a message to world leaders.

Swale council's Janet Hill has written to 100 businesses, schools, agencies and councillors to encourage them to take part in the Global Campaign for Climate Action via its TckTckTck campaign.

The project was started by UN secretary general Kofi Annan after he asked 100 world leaders to support the campaign. Swale council was asked to get involved by the Government.

Council leader Cllr Andrew Bowles said many small steps result in giant strides and Swale could help to change the world. Visit www.tcktcktck.org to get involved.

Crossing closed by crash

A CAR was left suspended over the edge of Sheppey crossing after a driver lost control in torrential rain.

The silver Corsa crashed just before 4pm on Wednesday, December 2, closing the Sheppey-bound A249 carriageway until the vehicle was recovered. The driver was not hurt. The same day a blue Fiesta veered off the road and hit metal railings on Sheppey Way at Bobbing, just before 5pm. The female driver suffered whiplash. No other vehicle was involved.

MP speeding action call

SPEEDING motorists will be curbed at a town hotspot after the MP for Faversham got involved. Hugh Robertson asked Swale council to act after receiving calls from residents in Salters Lane.

The council recommended solutions including an interactive speed sign, more police patrols and parking restrictions.

Car blaze 'not arsonist'

A CAR fire on the Isle of Sheppey was not the work of the Sheerness arsonist, police have said.

Emergency crews were called to Scotchman Lane, Minster, at 5.25pm on Tuesday, December 1, to reports of a burning vehicle. The cause of the fire is not known. No-one was injured.

Police can cop an earful

A POLICE surgery will be held in Faversham on December 11 offering people the chance to discuss policing concerns.

The session will run outside Morrisons supermarket in West Street, Faversham, from 10am to 4pm. To find out more, visit the police website at www.kent.police.uk.

Party's on ice as cops seize fake Bollinger

■ BY JILL HURST

POLICE are keeping the champagne on ice indefinitely after discovering a stash of counterfeit Bollinger.

The fake fizz was seized last month along with imitation iPods and rip-off designer gear, all on sale to Christmas shoppers in Sittingbourne High Street.

A 44-year-old Greenhithe man, arrested in connection with the haul, is now on bail pending further inquiries.

Sgt Jason Hedges said: "Magnums of Bollinger usually retail at about £79. These were being sold for £25 from the back of a van in the High Street.

"At first glance the iPod Nanos looked genuine but were cheap imitations dressed up well. The purses were all identical apart from the logos."

The discovery was made as part of a crackdown on crime and anti-social behaviour over Christmas.

Extra officers will be out across Swale during the day and at night to tackle rowdy revellers

and drink drivers, as well as shoplifters and rogue traders. The operation aims to make Swale a safer place in which to shop and enjoy a night out during the holiday period.

Police are working closely with licensees and door staff in the run up to the festive season, to ensure the responsible sale and consumption of alcohol.

Pubs and clubs have radio contact with the police through the Swale Safe scheme, which results in an immediate response to any trouble.

Inspector Evan Jones said: "The aim is to make Swale's three town centres – Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Faversham – safer and more inviting places to shop and socialise. We want people to have a good time, but to do so safely."

PC Warren Jarvis is leading the crackdown on drink/drug driving across Swale.

He said: "Officers will be on all the major routes looking for those who could be driving under the influence, but also on the cut-



GOING FLAT: Sittingbourne officers took the fizz out of a fake champagne scam – and others – in the High Street

throughs we know some drivers use. We will be visiting pubs and will have patrol cars in pub car parks as a deterrent and to give people advice.

"We will have extra patrols out 24 hours a day, so those who drive home in the morning after a Christmas party, who might still be over the limit, will get caught."

"A drunk or drugged driver could end up killing themselves, a passenger or someone else, as their reactions will be much slower."

There is also a dedicated email address if the public want to inform police about a drink driver. They can leave details anonymously at roads.policing.



Swale's leading policeman to answer your questions

SWALE'S top policeman has promised to answer questions posed by Yoursware readers about policing issues in the district.

If you have a query about crime or policing in your neighbourhood or the borough as a whole, simply email us, or send a letter, using the addresses below and we will forward it to Chief Insp Tony Henley (pictured left), the district's top cop. His answers will be published over the course of the next few weeks.

In addition, a Have Your Say Day will be held in Sittingbourne town centre on Saturday, December 19, at which shoppers can talk to officers about issues where they live, any concerns they might have or seek crime prevention advice.

To pose a question to Chief Insp Henley, email yourswale@kosmedia.co.uk or write to Yoursware, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford TN25 6SR.



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Page 37





TO THE RESCUE: Specialist firefighters based at Faversham deal with animal emergencies across Kent

Animal rescue experts await call of the wild

SPECIALIST firefighters at Faversham are saving more than just human lives as the cold winter weather sets in.

The animal rescue unit, based at Faversham fire station, is the only crew of its kind in Kent and takes up to 100 SOS calls each year from all over the county.

Working alongside a vet or the RSPCA, they use body armour, cranes, straps and lifting equipment and have saved horses stuck in ice, cattle trapped in ditches and even a baby seal stranded in Faversham Creek.

Green watch manager Peter Campbell said the primary goal was to stop people being injured by attempting their own rescue operation.

He said: "We respond to SOS calls – anything from dogs to horses. It's a free service at the moment, but it's not a statutory requirement.

"None of us likes to see animals in distress, but we deliver the service primarily to keep humans safe from injury who would otherwise mount their own rescue attempts.

"Large animals such as cows and horses can be dangerous when distressed. They are

■ BY JILL HURST

powerful creatures and can cause a lot of damage when trapped or panicked.

"Ten years ago even firefighters suffered a lot of injuries from animals, but this has declined dramatically. Because of our specialist training, the worst that I've heard of is a pulled back."

All 14 of the green and red watch firefighters at Faversham have been trained in animal rescue techniques. Each has attended an agricultural college in Plumpton, Sussex, and received extensive schooling.

They use rescue techniques devised by the British Equine Association and always work alongside vets and the RSPCA to ensure creatures get the best possible care. Mr Campbell recalled one of his most memorable calls was to help an old shire horse.

He said: "The horse was probably about 30 years old and very big. She had got down in the stable but was then unable to stand again so was in distress.

"We worked with the vet and thankfully were able to help her on her feet. That was a good sight to see."

SmartWater takes the initiative

A HI-TECH police initiative will help the Milton community protect their homes from burglars.

Police visited properties to distribute SmartWater and show people how to use it.

Each bottle of the invisible liquid has a unique forensic code, similar to DNA, linking marked property to an address.

Suspects are routinely scanned for SmartWater using ultraviolet detection equipment.

Police plan to erect street signs to warn would-be thieves when they enter SmartWater zones.



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NEWS IN BRIEF

MP in clear over expenses

FAVERSHAM MP Hugh Robertson has been given the all clear by officials investigating the Commons expenses scandal.

The inquiry was led by Sir Thomas Legg who was appointed by Prime Minister Gordon Brown and scrutinised all MPs' personal expense claims from 2004-09.

Sir Thomas confirmed in a letter to Mr Robertson there were no issues of concern surrounding his claims.

Mr Robertson said while he was not surprised at the result he was delighted at the news.

The shadow sports and Olympics minister said: "It is vital we bring this matter to a close, imposing sanctions on those who have broken the rules and introducing a new scheme that strikes the correct balance between allowing an MP to do his job and ensuring transparency and public confidence."

Speeding car couple fined

A HUSBAND and wife from Faversham have been fined for speeding after blaming the offence on each other.

Rebecca and Stephen Streek, of Belvedere Road, were each ordered to pay a £350 fine and £50 costs, plus given six penalty points, for failing to identify the driver of a speeding car registered to Mrs Streek, 42.

The pair sent identical letters to officials, each blaming the other for the offence, caught on camera in Pin Hill, Canterbury, in January, this year.

The case came before magistrates in Margate on Tuesday, November 24.

Calls for parking amnesty

ROAD safety campaigners have called for an amnesty on cars left at railway stations over the Christmas period.

The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) has appealed for fines and clamps to be suspended to deter motorists from being tempted to drive home after drinking.

Spokesman Kevin Dalaney said: "An amnesty will allow commuters a chance to get to the station and pay for the next day's parking before getting a fine.

"Transport bosses should make it easier to leave the car alone if you have had a drink."



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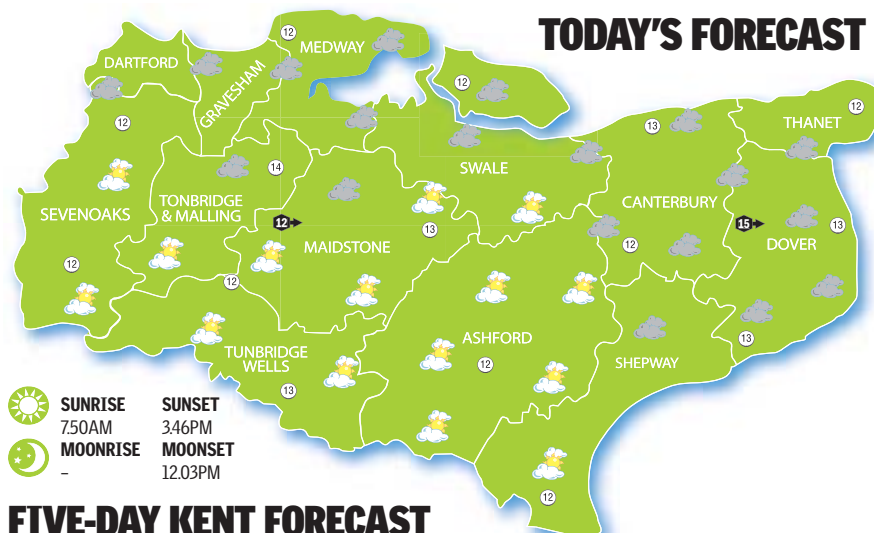
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Chatham	Saturday	8:49am	5.4m
	Sunday	9:54am	5.4m
Dover	Saturday	7:19am	6.0m
	Sunday	8:19am	6.0m
Dungeness	Saturday	7:13am	6.7m
	Sunday	8:12am	6.9m
Ramsgate	Saturday	7:49am	4.5m
	Sunday	8:49am	4.6m
Sheerness	Saturday	8:37am	5.2m
	Sunday	9:42am	5.2m
Whitstable	Saturday	8:44am	4.8m
	Sunday	9:51am	4.9m



AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Amsterdam	7°C	Madrid	10°C
Athens	15°C	New York	3°C
Barcelona	17°C	Paris	8°C
Beijing	1°C	Rome	13°C
Bombay	30°C	Sydney	32°C
Cape Town	21°C	Tenerife	22°C
Cardiff	9°C	Tokyo	13°C
Gibraltar	17°C	Vancouver	4°C
Hong Kong	18°C	Warsaw	6°C
Las Palmas	21°C	Wellington	17°C

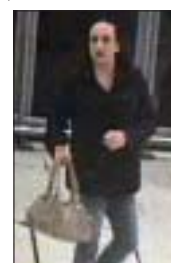
FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon		Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Ashford	11°C	13°C	10°C	9°C	8°C	Gravesend	11°C	13°C	10°C	9°C	8°C
Canterbury	10°C	12°C	10°C	9°C	8°C	Maidstone	10°C	14°C	10°C	8°C	8°C
Chatham	10°C	13°C	10°C	8°C	8°C	Ramsgate	10°C	12°C	10°C	9°C	8°C
Dartford	11°C	13°C	10°C	9°C	8°C	Rochester	10°C	13°C	10°C	8°C	8°C
Dover	10°C	13°C	11°C	9°C	8°C	Sevenoaks	9°C	12°C	9°C	7°C	7°C
Faversham	10°C	13°C	10°C	8°C	8°C	Sittingbourne	10°C	13°C	10°C	8°C	8°C
Folkestone	10°C	13°C	11°C	9°C	8°C	Tonbridge	10°C	13°C	10°C	8°C	8°C
Gillingham	10°C	13°C	10°C	8°C	8°C	Tun Wells	10°C	13°C	10°C	8°C	8°C

Do you know woman who may have seen sex assault?

OFFICERS from the British Transport Police are trying to track down a woman who may have witnessed a serious sexual assault on a young woman from Swale, *writes Jill Hurst*.

They have taken the unusual step of releasing CCTV footage of the potential witness to the incident, which happened on Friday, October 9, at around 5.10pm outside London Victoria train station.



MYSTERY: CCTV image

A 22-year-old Sittingbourne woman was followed across the station by a man who repeatedly tried to make conversation with her.

He is then alleged to have forced himself upon her before touching her indecently.

The alleged assault happened in the forecourt area to the right of the main entrance arch by the rear of the Iron Duke public house.

The attacker fled the scene and the victim returned to the station to report the incident.

Detective Constable Andy Parkinson, the investigating officer from the British Transport Police, said: "We believe this woman could have key information that could assist our investigation into this incident."

"We know from our enquiries that the victim reported the incident to this woman and we believe she was catching a train on platform two heading toward the Medway, Ramsgate or Dover areas. Anyone who recognises this woman or has any information is asked to come forward and contact police on 0800 40 50 40 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111."

A 37-year-old man from Thornton Heath was arrested on October 15, on suspicion of sexual assault and has been bailed to return to British Transport Police in late December.

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QUESTION & ANSWER

MP HUGH ROBERTSON



Q Tell us a little bit about yourself.

A I was born in the Kent and Canterbury Hospital in 1962 and have lived in Kent all my life as has my wife Anna. We live in the mid Kent part of the constituency, with our two-year-old son, and not too far from my parents in Canterbury and my wife's parents, near Maidstone.

After university I spent just over 10 years in the Army, seeing active service in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, the Gulf War and Sarajevo. I left the Army in 1995 and spent the period until my election in 2001 working for Schroders, latterly as head of new business development for the property division.

Q If you could put one thing right with the world what would it be?

A The Middle East peace process or lack of one. It impacts on much of what is wrong in the world today.

Q Politicians are on short term contracts. What's your contingency?

A I suppose the obvious answer would be to go back to my former job or a similar one in the city. However, in the long term I would like to continue my involvement in sport. It was not something that I envisaged doing when I entered Parliament in 2001 but I have enjoyed the last four years as the shadow sports and Olympics minister enormously.

Q All female candidate lists. What's it all about and what are your views?

A There is a clear and obvious need to make Parliament more representative of the people it serves and getting more women and ethnic minorities selected is an important part of that process.

I would like to see more people entering Parliament at an older age, preferably in their early 50s, when they have real experience of the outside world and only want to serve for three or four Parliaments. The trend for younger MPs in their early 30s, often entirely from a political background, is not good for Parliament or politics.

Q Has being a politician made you cynical?

A No, but I do get very fed-up with the tactics used by national lobbying organisations. However, even after nearly two Parliaments I still find myself getting quite moved by individual letters written by constituents.

Q You must meet all sorts of people. Any odd requests?

A I often say that being an MP gives you the opportunity to meet some of the very best people you could possibly want to meet and a few of the worst. I've had some extremely odd requests from constituents over the years including two people who claimed to be related to the Royal Family and one mother who

wrote to me demanding that I give her son a job. I always enjoy the letters from people who claim to have voted for me but then send the letter to the wrong MP.

Q It must get dull sitting through endless sessions in the House. Ever fallen asleep?

A Never in the House but my army training has given me a soldier's ability to sleep anywhere, at any time in almost any position.

Q What was your last good read?

A I am reading a book by a young former Army officer about his tour in Afghanistan called The Junior Officers Reading Club. I am a great Patrick Leigh Fermor fan and have read his collection of letters.

Q What's on the stereo these days?

A Honest answer – my son's CD of animal songs.

Q Anything else you'd like to share?

A I tend to find that the two things that people most associate with me are my Army background and my love of sport. However, in the long term I hope most people, whether they agreed with my politics or not, would remember me as someone who tried his best for his constituents.

Q & A

Hugh Robertson, Conservative MP for Faversham and Mid Kent, talks to **Jill Hurst** about his time in the Army, how he came to be an MP and why he'd like Parliament to be more representative

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Father's grief becomes a cry from the heart

■ BY MARIJKE COX

A GRIEVING father has written a book about coping with the death of his teenage son and the tragic suicide of his ex-wife who could not face life without her boy.

In his book, *Losing James – A Father Cries Too*, Michael Bollom gives a candid account of how he dealt with the double tragedy that tore his world apart.

The 50-year-old, from Bearsted, near Maidstone, recalled the moment on December 4, 2005, that he found out his 16-year-old son James was dead.

"I felt a complete numbness," he said. "My life fell apart. I didn't really know what was going on for those first few months."

James was killed in a car crash in Watlington, near Maidstone, a month short of his 17th birthday. He had been a passenger in a speeding car that went out of control and hit an oncoming vehicle.

Mr Bollom, a director of a manufacturing company in Sittingbourne, said: "James died instantly. His side of the car took the full impact of the crash. Losing someone through the fault of somebody else feels even worse."

"The driver was done for dangerous driving and was sentenced to two years and three months in prison, but some of that was spent on probation. The penalty didn't seem to take into account that a life was lost."

But things got worse for Mr Bollom when, just three months after the fatal crash that killed his son, his ex-wife Samantha took her own life.

"She couldn't cope with life without James," he said. "They had a very good relationship; they were best friends. She just couldn't go on without him."

James shared his time between his parents, but spent the majority with his mother.

Mr Bollom said: "Samantha and I had a good relationship. When she died it was like reliving the whole experience of James's death again."

Asked whether he had considered suicide himself, Mr Bollom said: "When you lose a child, of course you think, 'What's the point?' But I was fortunate to have a strong network around me, including my wife of ten years. But Samantha felt she couldn't carry on."

In his book, Mr Bollom talks about how he sought solace in the spiritual realm through a medium. He admitted that prior to the



HAPPIER TIMES: Teenager James was the best man at his father's Michael Bollom's wedding



LONE BURDEN: Mr Bollom on James's memorial bench

tragedy he was sceptical about spiritual life, but now believes he would not have got through his grief without it.

"It was able to show me that no matter what, James is always there," he said.

"There were things the medium knew that were so accurate, things only James and I would know. I talk about this in the book, but only as my opinion. I don't want to preach to people about how to deal with their grief."

A main factor in Mr Bollom's book is that it deals with the grief of a father.

"It is rare for a book like this to be written by a man," he said.

"Most are written from a female perspective, but I think it's very important to see that fathers suffer too."

"They have to carry on and be strong for others and in a way they have a harder job because they are trying to deal with their grief while carrying on as normal. It's hard to see a mother grieving for a lost child, but at times fathers are somewhat forgotten when their grief is just as bad."

"No parent should have to bury a child."

Money raised from sales of the book – which took 15 months to write – is going to a charity to help people dealing with bereavement. Mr Bollom said he was looking into which charity to choose.

He added: "I miss James, we were close. He was best man at my wedding. He was always smiling and liked by everyone. There were 450 people at his funeral, all of different ages."

"Writing this book has helped me cope with his death. I hope it will help others who have lost someone close."

• *Losing James – A Father Cries Too*, is available at £799 by contacting Michael Oke at Bound Biographies on 01869 232911. Alternatively, email mike@boundbiographies.com.



Stargazers aim to reclaim the night

DARKNESS at night is one of the things that defines the countryside, but that is rapidly declining and with it our views of the stars and planets.

For eight years Anton Vamplew worked at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich. He now runs Planetarium Earth, a company dedicated to space and astronomy, from his home in Langton Green, near Tunbridge Wells.

He said: "Responsible councils are getting better with their policies for preventing light pollution, but we have a long way to go."

"Security lighting is a concern. I understand the need, but with a little effort the searchlights on private property, public buildings and business premises can be scaled down and reflected not to embrace the sky. It is a matter of education."

"Campaigning has made a difference in some areas, but towns and cities will never get the views of the skies at night back."

Trevor Cannon, of the Mid Kent Astronomical Society, is among those campaigning for the return of dark skies.

Deterioration

He said: "Over 30 years' study I have seen a big difference in the clarity of the sky at night. There has been a dramatic deterioration. We have to curb both light and air pollution. There is law, but no-one seems to be imposing it."

Already the heart of the Milky Way is blotted out for more than half the UK population and the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) has data from satellites showing the light pollution is spreading.

Michael Smith, professor of astronomy at the University of Kent, said: "More than 300 megawatts of power is wasted skywards from UK street lights and the annual cost is £100 million."

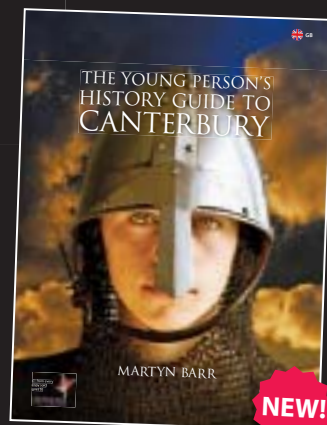
It seems that many are still unaware that intrusive lighting is, since 2006, by law a statutory nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act. Exterior light emitted from premises that is prejudicial to health or a nuisance is a criminal offence. The CPRE campaign would like to see it used to raise awareness with discussion and mediation in the first place rather than court action.

They also point out that the law clearly cites lights from premises so street lighting is ruled out, but they urge people to report other bad examples that are causing damage to environmental health officers.

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Are new NHS treatment cash cards the healthy choice for us?

WHEN I go to the shop to buy breakfast cereal, I want a choice.

Currently I'm going for the healthy option and buying Shredded Wheat, but next week, who knows?

I might decide to start my day with sugar-coated toasted confectionery, or purchase a box of those brightly coloured things with marshmallow bits that make it difficult to concentrate if you eat too many of them.

Actually, they may have been banned now... the point is, I have a choice, and that's just great. Choice is a popular thing; it allows us to assert our individuality through the medium of humorous ring tones, for example.

In fact, having a choice, a say in who runs our country, is what our great democracy is built on.

But is it always good to have a choice? Kent has been picked, along with some other counties, to pilot an NHS scheme which could take choice too far.

The plan is to issue patients a cash card, loaded with x thousand pounds they can

spend on health services of their choosing.

The pilot is being run with pregnant women, who will be asked to pick what they want to spend their birth-budget on, instead of those meddling, fully-qualified, experienced professionals doing it for them. Fantastic!

But do pregnant women really need to feel in control of their own health budget? I would assume they already have quite a lot to think about, let alone taking on a temporary unpaid job as an NHS finance manager.

Not being pregnant, or indeed, a woman, I don't know. But what I do know is that if I am ill, particularly if it is something serious, I just want to go somewhere and be cured.

I don't want to choose my own treatment. I want a doctor to do that, because he is rather more likely to know what he's doing.

Yet if the pilot is deemed a success, then the cash cards could be rolled out for other groups – cancer patients, the elderly, the terminally ill.

Professional medical staff have already lined up against the plan, with both the Royal College of Midwives and the King's Trust

arguing that similar schemes in Europe have led to misspent money which does nothing to improve patients' health.

Some groups, the young, the old, the mentally ill, may not be in the best position to correctly judge what treatment they need.

And aside from the practical issues, there are serious moral questions here too.

Who is ultimately responsible if the patient makes the wrong choice? The type one diabetes sufferer who decides to trust in homeopathic charlatans instead of taking insulin injections? Is it their fault their condition deteriorates?

Sometimes choice is not what we need. Breakfast cereal? Yes. Elected representatives? Yes. Ring tones? If you really must.

But when we are ill we just need to be confident we are getting the best care possible, wherever we go, without the added stress of balancing a budget.

EDITOR'S NOTE: All blogs are supplied with full name and address of the authors. They do not reflect the view of the newspaper but are designed to give our readers the chance to air their views.

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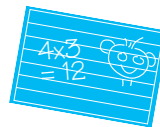
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BREAK TIME

Free parking call to keep children safe

A CAMPAIGN for free parking near a school in Milton Regis has been launched because congestion problems are putting children's lives at risk, claim councillors.

It's one of a number of measures in an effort to decrease traffic around Milton Court Primary School in Brewery Road.

Swale councillor Elvie Lowe and county councillor Mike Whiting have written to the borough's transport board highlighting their concerns.

They propose to extend zigzag lines in Brewery Road toward the High Street, introduce double yellow lines in Cooks Lane and offer car drivers free parking for up to 30 minutes on school days at the nearby Milton Regis High Street car park.

Councillor Whiting said: "We believe that these proposals would create clearer sightlines outside the building during the school rush hour yet minimise the impact on local people and their visitors at other times."

Mayor is guest at school dance show

CHILDREN on the Isle of Sheppey danced the night away when they staged their yearly dance show.

Almost 100 pupils from the Helen "K" School of Dance took part in the event at Leysdown.

The two- to 18-year-olds were cheered on by an audience that included the Mayor of Swale.

Pupils spellbound by magic activity day at Hogwarts

■ BY JILL HURST

TEACHERS cast a spell over students and made learning fun when they turned their Sittingbourne school into a Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

The Sittingbourne Community College staged the magical activity day after being inspired by the popular Harry Potter books written by JK Rowling.

Students and teachers were divided into four Hogwarts houses, Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw and Slytherin and dressed as their favourite Harry Potter characters. Each house competed on a range of educational activities including creating potions, playing quiddich and even reading the Harry Potter novels.

Head Alan Barham said: "Experience days have been put in place to meet the needs of the new key stage three curriculum.

"It is a novel and different way for students to learn and really engages them as we focus the themes on current issues or popular culture. This one in particular was designed to highlight literacy and improve things like teamwork.

"It certainly worked. The majority of students believed they worked well as a team member and some even said they would read the Harry Potter books as a result of the day.

Head of art, Cat Taylor, said mixing pupils from different age groups allowed children to build up a good report with their peers and



WIZARD DAY: Children at Sittingbourne Community College experience the power of magic to help them learn

staff. She added: "The themes covered allowed them to learn life skills as well as educational tools. The day was a real experience for all involved and was a great success."

Harry Potter is a series of seven fantasy novels. The books chronicle the adventures of an adolescent wizard, Harry Potter, and his best friends Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger.

All three are students at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The story centres on Harry's struggle against the evil wizard Lord Voldemort who killed Harry's parents in his quest to conquer the wizarding world.

If you would like to find out more about The Sittingbourne Community College visit www.sittingbourne.kent.sch.uk

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TALK TIME

STEFAN MARTIN

The Isle of Sheppey's new neighbourhood sergeant tells us why what he hopes to achieve and why shoppers should be vigilant at Christmas



How did you get into the police force?

I joined the force when I was 19. I spent 10 years working in Ashford as a police officer transferring to mid-Kent as a sergeant. From there I worked as a section officer and in custody so I've had experience in a variety of roles.

Why did you want to be the new neighbourhood sergeant?

When I heard the role was available it really appealed to me. Working in a neighbourhood team means I have more time to resolve issues within the community and work with partner agencies to come up with the best solutions.

What do you hope to achieve?

My vision is to make sure everyone who has contact with the neighbourhood team has confidence that we will deal with their issues and update them on the action we take. I also want people suffering from any issues that the police can help with to talk to us.

Anything you'd like to add?

With the festive season upon us I'd like to warn shoppers to keep a close eye on their purses and wallets as this is the time of year when pickpockets take advantage.

If you see any police constables patrolling the High Street in Sheerness don't hesitate to speak to them. I look forward to meeting as many Sheppey residents as possible over the coming months and in the meantime I hope that people will have a safe and happy Christmas.

YOUR LETTERS



Immigrants are given life of Riley

While feeling sympathy for refugees in Calais, I don't see why we should be an open door to anyone who wants to live here.

How long will we have to pay people on benefits before they can find work? Some never do.

What is this doing to our housing problems and National Health Service?

Unaccompanied children should not be allowed into the country. Anything could happen to them and they could be taken by unscrupulous people. They would be better off in their own countries with their families to care for them.

Why do we not help with accommodation, infrastructure, schools etc in countries over the first safe border?

This would help everyone. We are giving too much and offering a life of Riley in Britain for people who will be fed, housed and given healthcare, and some of these people may never work a single day once they're here.

They should be refused unless they can show they will be able to work and care for themselves.

Pat Moore, comment posted on www.yourswale.co.uk



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We should give refugees support

The question of why refugees want to come to this country is a

complex one but is certainly connected to our reputation as a major economic and political power as well as being a country where it is possible for migrants to work hard and achieve a better life. In my view we not

only have a responsibility to the migrants at our borders but we should take pride that the UK is still seen as a place where people come from across the world to contribute to our society.

Refugees' energy and drive contributes vastly to our economy and as most migrants are young and healthy they do not use the health service to any great extent. No asylum-seeker is allowed to work and the Government supports them at a rate well below income support.

Kent Refugee Help has not received any money from the UN to support our work in Calais and what we have done has been alongside other groups and individuals who are concerned for the welfare of a destitute group of people.

Your article implied that supporting refugees is making KRH a good living. KRH is very small, and most of us work unpaid. We have two part-time workers, earning the kind of hourly rate most journalists wouldn't get out of bed for. We raise our funds from private donations and charitable trusts. More importantly we are working to put ourselves out of business – and no-one will be happier than us when Dover Immigration Removal Centre is closed down.

Kent Refugee Help, like other local organisations such as the Dover Detainee Support Group and the Kent Refugee Action Network, is keen that people understand the reality of what it is to be a refugee and we try to support the most vulnerable in our society – those who are marginalised, criminalised and without rights and entitlements.

Lucy Williams
chair of Kent Refugee Help

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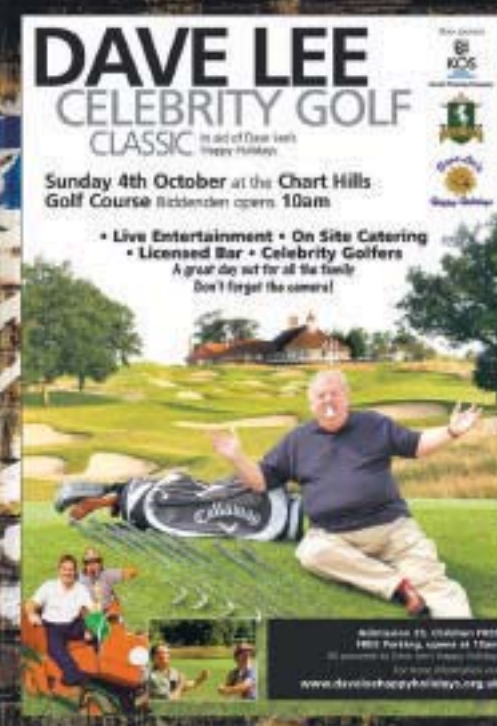
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Bob, posted on www.yoursware.co.uk



Only investment will stop binge-drinking

Yet again Swale tops the tables for something, and it's not exam results. The fact it has a high number of binge-drinkers doesn't surprise me; just visit Sittingbourne High Street

on a Friday or Saturday night and there's all the research you need.

Until more businesses move into the High Street, bringing more jobs, money and prospects, I predict we'll continue to beat the rest of Kent when it comes to things like binge-drinking and teenage pregnancy.

It's a sad state of affairs the area has deteriorated to this extent while others have prospered.

Margaret Hodge, Sittingbourne

Log on to volunteer and help out in 2010

This new year is a significant one as we move forward into a new decade, which is why I encourage your readers to make a difference in 2010 and Do-it for volunteering!

By logging on to www.do-it.org.uk, the UK's leading volunteering website, readers can search from over a million opportunities to volunteer. The website, run by online charity www.youthnet.org, is full of information and guidance.

Volunteering makes huge differences to communities and provides valuable life experience – so why not give it a go in 2010.

Martyn Lewis, CBE
Chairman and Founder of YouthNet

Carers deserve a happy Christmas too

For the hundreds of thousands of carers in the Southeast, Christmas will be hard, unrelenting work, just as it has been all year long.

Carers provide round-the-clock care for loved ones, often without any break, with very little support and hardly any recognition of their plight. Many carers become disabled themselves as a result of the stress.

I would like to ask your readers to spare a thought for the invisible army of carers in the region. I work at a respite holiday centre for disabled people and carers called Vitalise Jubilee Lodge, in Chigwell, run by the charity Vitalise. The guests and carers who take desperately needed respite breaks here always tell me how important a break is in their lives. Just one week a year can make the difference between coping and despair.

I would like to ask your readers to remember that carers need breaks just as much as the people they care for, and to support our vital work in the region. To make a donation or for more information, call 020 8501 2331 or visit www.vitalise.org.uk

Steve Trump, Vitalise Jubilee Lodge

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Ray's hooked on panto role

Home and Away actor to leave sunny Summer Bay to play the villainous pirate in classic pantomime tale

PETER PAN



Saturday, December 12 to Sunday, January 3
Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells

AUDIENCES will be hooked on the Assembly Hall's pantomime when Peter Pan opens this weekend.

The villain of the piece has travelled from the other side of the world to take part in the show, which promises to be an extravaganza of festive family fun.

Ray Meagher is best known for playing amiable Alf Stewart in Australian soap opera, Home and Away, but this Christmas he is donning the wig, coat and scary prop to play the wicked Captain Hook.

Having played Alf since the soap's very first episode in 1988, Meagher has appeared in the Guinness World Records as the longest-serving actor in a serial. His character has owned a liquor store, boat hire service, caravan park and yacht brokerage, while standing by his wife Ailsa as she suffered from depression.

Meagher began his career as a television actor before landing a number of film roles in films such as Breaker Morant, Newsfront and My Brilliant Career. His role as the villainous Captain Hook will be a far cry from all the drama of life in Summer Bay, as he enters the magical world of Neverland.

His hapless sidekick Smee will be played by Christopher Pizzey, who will be familiar to television viewers as Mr Stephen from the Basil Brush Show. He appeared as a main character in four series of the hugely popular children's programme and is currently starring in the new Planet Ajay on CBBC.

Jessica Punch plays Peter Pan, with Lucy Johnson as the charismatic fairy Tinkerbell. The role of Mrs Darling is played by Sarah Jane Buckley, who appeared as Cathy Barnes in the teen drama, Hollyoaks.

The Nitwits will be adding some acrobatic flourish to the Pirate Crew, adding yet more excitement to a pan-



tomime that promises plenty of swashbuckling, laughter and magic.

Since Peter Pan's first appearance in the 1900s, JM Barrie's creation has enchanted readers of all ages and generated a number of films, plays and pantomimes. The magical tale of the boy who never grew up remains a perennial favourite and

audiences will find themselves caught up in the Assembly Hall's captivating Neverland.

Ticket prices start at £12.50, with concessions and group rates available.

To book call the box office on 01892 530613/532072 or go to www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk.

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PAUL DUNTON

Thursday, December 10
Pizza Express, Maidstone



DISCOVER the best of local music talent by spending an evening with Paul Dunton and guests.

A talented singer-songwriter, Dunton opens the show in the Music Room with his own brand of piano pop with a classical twist. He will be performing with his orchestral crew and is sure to provide a breathtaking musical experience.

The second act on the bill will be a special mystery guest, adding a frisson of excitement to proceedings.

Encompassing folk, roots and blues, the fantastic Joanne Louise Parker combines a diverse musical background with observant lyrics that explore natural, spiritual and emotional themes.

As one of the south east's leading unsigned acts, Violet



Jive has built up a reputation for excellent performances. They conjure up an atmospheric blend of 50s jazz, swing, alternative rock and Latin grooves to create an unforgettable sound.

Paul Dunton's showcases are the perfect way to discover the wealth of talent Kent has to offer. The show starts at 7pm and tickets cost £7. Book at www.pizzaexpresslive.co.uk.

WEBB SISTERS

Thursday, December 10
Blues Rock Café, Gillingham



FRESH from a US tour with Leonard Cohen, the Webb Sisters will be playing for a lucky Medway audience this week.

Charley and Hattie have just completed a huge tour of the States with the music legend and have performed to about three million people during more than 250 concerts, all over the world.

Last month they played at prestigious venues such as Madison Square Garden in New York and Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas.

They can also be heard on Sting's latest album, but this week they can be seen at the KASBAH Christmas party at the Blues Rock Café in the Priestfield Stadium.

The event is being held to raise money for KASBAH, or Kent Association for Spina



Bifida and Hydrocephalus, and Hattie Webb House including Hattie's 'For Thought' Fund.

As well as the Webb Sisters' performance, there will be entertainment from Bill and Ian of Medway

Hospital Radio fame, a free drink on arrival and a buffet. Each ticket sold will include free entry into KASBAH's Christmas prize draw.

Tickets cost £16. To book call 01474 536501 or email admin@kasbah.org.uk.

ROBB JOHNSON

Saturday, December 12
Orange Street Music Club, Canterbury



FOLK fans can see one of the UK's finest songwriters perform for Twilight Folk Club this weekend.

The highly-acclaimed Robb Johnson has worked with a wide variety of bands and artists, as well as being a successful solo artist.

His songs have found their way into the repertoires of a diverse number of artists, from folk legend Roy Bailey to cabaret diva Barb Jungr, while his champions in the press have been just as varied.

Mojo and the Daily Telegraph have both praised his double CD Gentle Men and Tony Benn reportedly cites Johnson's Winter Turns to Spring as his favourite song.

From pavements and pickets to the Royal Albert Hall,



Johnson has delighted audiences of all sizes. During the BBC Folk Britannia series in 2006, Johnson led the artists and audience in a rendition of the First World War song, Hanging On the Old Barbed Wire.

Other projects include

starting his own label, Irregular Records, and co-writing Woman, a biography of Yoko Ono.

The concert starts at 8pm and admission is £5. Call 01227 760801 or visit www.myspace.com/twilight-folkclub

SWALE LEISURE

Supergroup line-up to be revealed at pub

MEET a folk supergroup when the Country Counts visit Faversham next Wednesday.

The exact line-up of the band will be a surprise on the night, but the Oyster Band's Alan Prosser, Sue Hudson and Cliff Bayliss are due to perform for Faversham Folk Club at the Chimney Boy in Preston Street. Tickets for the concert at 8.30pm are £7 for members, £8 for non-members. Entry is free for under-18s. Call 01795 536857.

Drama students offer a festive favourite

YOUNG stars of the future bring some Christmas magic to Sittingbourne with the festive favourite, Cinderella.

Students from The Edge Theatre School present the show at the Avenue Theatre in Avenue of Remembrance at 7pm on Saturday and 2pm and 6pm on Sunday. Tickets cost £6/£5. To book call the box office on 01795 471140. More details at www.avenuetheatre.co.uk.

Artists invited to join forum for open day

LEARN about Swale Arts Forum at today's open evening.

The Swale Arts Forum aims to promote all aspects of the arts in the borough.

The event takes place at the Avenue Theatre in Sittingbourne at 6.30pm. Anyone interested in joining the Forum can call Sioux Peto on 01795 428150 or visit www.swaleartsforum.org.

Meet Father Christmas down on the farm

FATHER Christmas will be visiting Farming World in Boughton this month.

This weekend young visitors are invited to meet Santa Claus in his grotto and receive a gift. He will also be collecting letters to take back to the North Pole.

Father Christmas can also be seen on December 19 and 20. For more information call 01227 751144 or visit www.farming-world.co.uk.

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SWALE SHOPPING

**More time to pick your
xmas gifts at Bluewater**

SHOPPERS have even more time to stock up on Christmas gifts with Bluewater's extended opening hours.

The shopping centre has announced a series of Mega Days which will offer more flexibility for customers as they try to beat the last-minute rush. Mega Days will take place from December 21-23 when Bluewater will be open from 9am to 11pm. Winter Wonderland will be open between 10am-11pm on those days. See www.bluewater.co.uk.

**Topshop finds a place
in Royal town at last**

DEDICATED followers of fashion will be in heaven with the new Topshop store in Tunbridge Wells.

The new store in Calverley Road opened last week and offers a great new shopping opportunity, with the mainline collections, footwear and accessories on sale over two floors. The gents do not miss out, as there is a Topman store in the basement.

Until the opening, Topshop's only store in Tunbridge Wells was shared with Dorothy Perkins.

**It'll be a laugh at book
launch with Harry Hill**

BAFTA-WINNING comedian Harry Hill will be signing copies of his new book at Bluewater on Thursday.

Also an author and TV presenter, Hill has Kent connections and mentioned Medway on a recent edition of ITV's hugely popular Harry Hill's TV Burp. He will be meeting fans and signing copies of Harry Hill's TV Burp Book at Waterstone's from 6pm. The book is published by Ebury Press and priced at £12.99. Call the store on 01322 624831.

**Click on to the best
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BUYING the perfect Christmas present for a loved one will be easy this year, thanks to www.shopstyle.co.uk.

In the same style as a wedding list, people can log onto the website and create their own online Christmas Wish List, choosing their ideal gifts from a selection of more than 2,000 top brands, designers and retailers. A link to the list can then be posted on Facebook, Twitter or simply emailed to friends and family.

Find out more at www.shopstyle.co.uk.

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YOUR TV REVIEW

■ BY TOM BETTS

NEVER MIND THE BUZZCOCKS BBC2, 10pm, Wednesday

A FEW years ago I would have avoided an episode of Never Mind The Buzzcocks by any means necessary, but it has really kicked on in recent times.

It is hardly must-see TV, but slowly and surely it has become one of the better comedy shows on the box.

The reason for avoiding it before was not the subject matter, or the team captains, or even the guests.

No, the thing that ruined the show, for 18 long series, was former host Mark Lamarr.

Not only was Lamarr not funny, but he seemed to be a genuinely nasty person, to boot. He took insulting people to a new level and I cannot work out how he never got lumped for being as spiteful as he was.

I often wondered if he was just being nasty for the sake of it, in the absence of anything funny to say, as he tore strips off everyone who dared to speak and answer a question, which can kind of make a quiz pointless.

They say sarcasm is the lowest form of wit... well, that was proven by Lamarr, who ruined from day one what might have been a really good show.

Simon Amstell, the man chosen to replace Lamarr, guided the ship to funnier waters and, while he was pretty nasty too, at least his cutting lines raised a laugh or two over the course of a few series.

Now, though, the show is helmed by a series of guest presenters, much like Have I Got News For You, and it's working very well.

Angus Deayton is very much missed on HIGNFY, even all these



COMEDY COUPLE: Team captains Phil Jupitus and Noel Fielding of Never Mind The Buzzcocks

years on, but Buzzcocks has flourished with a different person in the hot-seat of late, while new team captain Noel Fielding, of The Mighty Boosh fame, lends a touch of Camden psychedelia to the half-hour.

Martin Freeman and Dermot O'Leary have all put in decent turns in the hot-seat of late, while new team captain Noel Fielding, of The Mighty Boosh fame, lends a touch of Camden psychedelia to the half-hour.

As a regular fixture in music magazine NME, he at least seems relevant to the essence of the show, that being pop and rock music.

Even man-mountain Phil Jupitus is starting to come out with a few decent gags. Wonders will never cease.

It had the worst of starts, and it kept going for years, but at last this is a show worth watching.

They got there in the end.

YOUR WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

BY RUSSELL GRANT



AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19)
EXERTING power from behind the scenes will be effective. People are intimidated by your strong personality. Ask a diplomatic Libra to serve as your spokesperson. Of course, you'll have to share your profits with this representative, but the results will be worth it.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aquarius** 09067-531762



TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21)
IT'S time to break out of your routine. Although venturing into new territory will be scary, it will also force you to draw upon hidden emotional resources. You're a lot more courageous than you realise. Turn a deaf ear to a colleague's warnings. Your courage can move mountains.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Taurus** 09067-531753



LEO (Jul 24-Aug 23)
YOU'RE giving lots of thought to the sort of work you'd like to be doing in the long-term future. Opportunities related to real estate, politics and construction are highly favoured. Fortunately, you know a powerful executive who can help you break in to such an industry.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Leo** 09067-531756



SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)
ACQUIRING business skills will be your first order of business. Fortunately, a magnetic teacher is prepared to take your knowledge to the next level. Don't be put off from applying for a position that has just opened in an important company. You have a great chance of landing this job.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Scorpio** 09067-531759



PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)
SPENDING time with friends will be your biggest priority. Lately, you've been putting the lion's share of your energy into work. While the results have been impressive, you can't help but feel a little lonely. Start making plans to have fun with your nearest and dearest.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Pisces** 09067-531763



GEMINI (May 22-Jun 22)
IT may be necessary to make a decision about a surgical procedure. Your love life is showing signs of strain, mainly because one of you is less invested in the relationship than the other. It may be best to break off this alliance now, before somebody gets really hurt.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Gemini** 09067-531754



VIRGO (Aug 24-Sep 23)
YOU'LL be making the social rounds this week. An endless round of parties will crowd your calendar. Be sure to attend as many as possible. If you're single, you could lock eyes with a sexy executive from across a crowded room. This could be a match made in heaven.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Virgo** 09067-531757



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)
YOU'RE thinking of ways to make more money. Finding a way to sell eco-friendly or recycled materials will be a great way to turn a profit. You've always been resourceful, and this will help you get a business off the ground. Friends may not be too enthusiastic about your plans.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Sagittarius** 09067-531760



ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)
YOU could be asked to lead a project. Conference calls, meetings and late nights at the office could all be in the cards. You may have to issue an ultimatum to a colleague who isn't pulling their weight. In addition, a loved one resents all the time you are spending on your career.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aries** 09067-531752



CANCER (Jun 23-Jul 23)
FORMING an alliance with a seasoned professional will help you move forward. Don't try to represent yourself in court or sell real estate by yourself. An expert will be worth their weight in gold. A relative may be jealous of this alliance because it keeps them out of the loop.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Cancer** 09067-531755



LIBRA (Sep 24-Oct 23)
FAMILY matters take up the majority of your time. It's possible you'll be planning a reunion or travelling across country to see some relatives. Powerful memories of childhood motivate you to bring up a painful subject with a relative. Don't be deterred by their anger.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Libra** 09067-531758



CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20)
YOUR commanding personality opens doors that were previously sealed to you. Take this opportunity to make a presentation to a powerful executive. This man will be impressed by your initiative. If you can't get ahead in your current job, think about quitting and getting another.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Capricorn** 09067-531761

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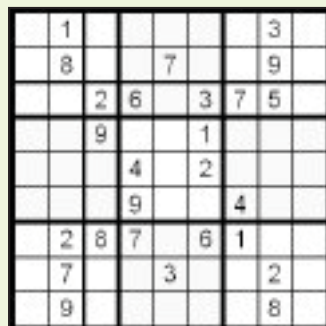
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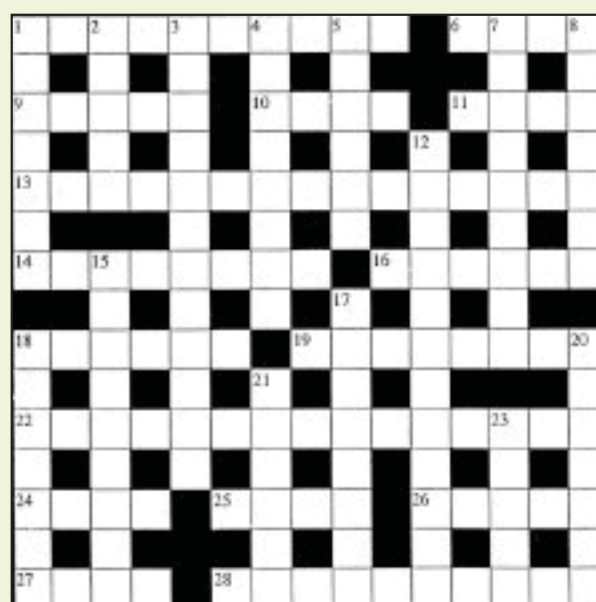
ACROSS

- 1 Frisk a para round wildlife area (6,4)
- 6 Tax man? (4)
- 9 A telephone call in a state of excitement (5)
- 10 Pinched some short measure (4)
- 11 Infernal banker (4)
- 13 Illegally taking the limelight? (8,3,4)
- 14 Drawing a puzzle and giving prize (8)
- 16 Unauthorised publication about robbery at sea (2)
- 18 A jacket not quite on fire (6)
- 19 More whimsical question in a true arrangement (8)
- 22 India was the most highly prized part of the collection (5,2,3,5)
- 24 Lady returning in North America (4)
- 25 Part of eye in art nouveau (4)
- 26 I pull out with one Italian man (5)
- 27 Said amphibian put feet on line (4)
- 28 Unusually wary in predicament, she could be dramatic (10)

DOWN

- 1 City bird on the water (7)
- 2 Lucky chance of finding ruler in chimney (5)
- 3 Rhythmical rowdy spree (6-6)
- 4 Distressing in Paignton resort (8)
- 5 About to quote or read aloud (6)
- 7 Ruthless shaver? (3-6)
- 8 Cab means to go on track from air-terminal to airstrip (7)
- 12 House that is round? Only half (12)
- 15 Deduction for pension (9)
- 17 Animal born among the gooseberries? (8)
- 18 It has joined from road junction (7)
- 20 Hurry to disturbance and act without restraint (3,4)
- 21 Whine from bridge partners I have left (6)
- 23 Old side yet to be paid (5)

SCRIBBLE HERE



QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- 1 Good thing (4,2,4)
- 6 Mop (4)
- 9 Famous person (slang) (5)
- 10 Disinclined (4)
- 11 Tactic (4)
- 13 They flock together (5,2,1,7)
- 14 Not containing milk products (3-5)
- 16 Make accordant (6)
- 18 Sharp turning (6)
- 19 Canine protecting property (5,3)
- 22 Immediately (2,3,4,2,1,3)
- 24 Egg-shaped (4)
- 25 Surfeit (4)
- 26 Musical work (5)
- 27 Behalf (4)
- 28 Phrase (10)

DOWN

- 1 French Dominican monk (7)
- 2 Orals (anag.) (5)
- 3 Very industrious (2,4,2,1,3)
- 4 Highly inflammable composition (8)
- 5 Discharge (3,3)
- 7 Borzoi (9)
- 8 Laurel (3-4)
- 12 MA (6,2,4)
- 15 Prowler (9)
- 17 Joker (8)
- 18 Enthusiastic (7)
- 20 Alight (3,4)
- 21 Long-winded (6)
- 23 Indo-European language (5)

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LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

SUDOKU SOLUTIONS No116

EASY



MEDIUM



HARD



CRYPTIC SOLUTION No116

ACROSS: 1 Casca 4 Jet-skier 8 Medicine-bottle 10 Long-range 11 Wonky 12 X-ray 13 Coachman 17 Physique 18 Crab 22 Waltz 24 Vouchsafe 25 Overdramatised 26 Oleander 27 Ninth. **DOWN:** 1 Complex 2 Sedentary 3 Accord 4 Janine 5 Tabletop 6 Katowice 7 Ellen 9 Cyan 14 Mortal sin 15 Pizzeria 16 Quivered 17 Pawn 19 Breadth 20 Murmur 21 Photon 23 Level.

QUICK SOLUTION No117

18 Zealots 20 Get down 21 Prolix 23 Hindi. 12 Master of Arts 15 Nighthawk 17 Quipster 4 Wildlife 5 Let off 7 Wolfhound 8 Bay-tree **DOWN:** 1 Jacobin 2 Solar 3 As busy as a bee 4 Clint 26 Rondo 27 Sake 28 Expression 22 At the drop of a hat 24 Oval 25 Non-dairy 16 Affine 18 Zigzag 19 Guard 10 Leth 11 Play 13 Birds of a feather 14 **ACROSS:** 1 Just as well 6 Swab 9 Celeb

Answers to all of this week's quizzes can be found on our website



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Chas plays Tap's rockney knees-up with His Band

BY SIMON ROBINSON

A COCKNEY Christmas treat will be served up in Chatham next week when Chas & His Band perform.

The trio will take to the stage at the Tap 'n' Tin for their now annual festive appearance at the venue.

It will be the first time pianist and singer Chas Hodges has played the Railway Street pub/club since bandmate Dave Peacock retired, but the legendary Londoner continues to perform the duo's most famous hits.

Fans can expect to hear classic C&D songs such as Rabbit, Ain't No Pleasin' You, Gertcha, Snooker Loopy and Margate.

The band – featuring Chas's son Nick on drums – will also perform a full Jerry Lee Lewis tribute, giving Chas the opportunity to rattle out some tales of his time on the road with the rock 'n' roll pioneer.

Chas will also be taking questions from the crowd throughout the evening.

Support on the night comes from Trouser Trumpets and Tyrannosaurus Alan.

The last two Chas & Dave Christmas gigs have featured former Libertines rocker Pete Doherty on the undercard, but there is to be no hat trick of appearances.

Videos of both Pete's and Chas & Dave's sets from 2007 are available on our website at www.yourkenttv.co.uk.

Tickets to this year's performance cost £12. Doors open at 7.30pm.

For more information about the venue, visit www.tapntin.co.uk.



DOWN TO CHATHAM: Chas Hodges at the Tap 'n' Tin with Pete Doherty in 2007, the Trouser Trumpets and Tyrannosaurus Alan

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RISING STAR: Teenage singer Luke Jackson sings Still Too Young to Tour



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- 2 My Last Mistake – 18/12 Westcoast Bar in Margate
- 3 Los Salvadores – 19/12 Ivy Leaf in Sheerness
- 4 Eclipse – 20/12 The Louis Armstrong in Dover
- 5 Zorzilla – 23/12 Kings Hall in Dover

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PROPERTY NEWS

Builders to focus on houses as demand falls for apartments

BARRATT Developments is to focus on building houses rather than apartments, in response to lenders' preferences.

The group's chief executive, Mark Clare, says the company will build what it knows it can sell and in the case of apartments, lenders are making life difficult for mortgage borrowers by asking for deposits of 25 per cent.

The oversupply of new-build apartments in the UK's city centres has been causing problem for banks and building societies since the onset of the credit crisis, with evidence that some properties were deliberately overvalued in large-scale mortgage scams.

Downturn

Buy-to-let investors in particular were encouraged into the market and since the property downturn, some apartments have lost 50 per cent of their value.

The company has also revealed that overall its private reservation rates per site have been running 34 per cent ahead of last year.

Furthermore, cancellations were down to 13 per cent for the period July 1 to November 8 2009, compared with 23.7 per cent in the same period of 2008.

Lettings company is ready to expand its internet business

LETTINGSEARCH.CO.UK has announced it is set for further expansion across the UK's major towns and cities.

The firm, which claims to be the country's largest lettings-only portal, has secured increased funding to back a substantial expansion of its agent and tenant base over the next six months.

Established in 2002, Lettingsearch currently lists about 250,000 properties and averages more than one million tenant searches a month.

Agents can list any number of properties for a flat fee per branch, with no set-up costs or minimum period of advertising.

Furthermore, landlords approaching the site are redirected to appropriate lettings agents, providing an additional income stream for small and large agents alike.



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There's light at the end of tunnel, say agents

■ BY NICK AMES

LEADING estate agents Strutt & Parker revealed a sharp drop in profits in its first results since converting to limited liability partnership status in May 2008.

Profits available to partners dropped 79 per cent from £16 million in 2008 to £3.3 million. Revenue was down by a quarter, from £86.3 million to £64.9 million.

However, the first six months of the current financial year have shown an improvement. The firm made a profit of £4.8 million, compared to £500,000 at the half-year stage last year.

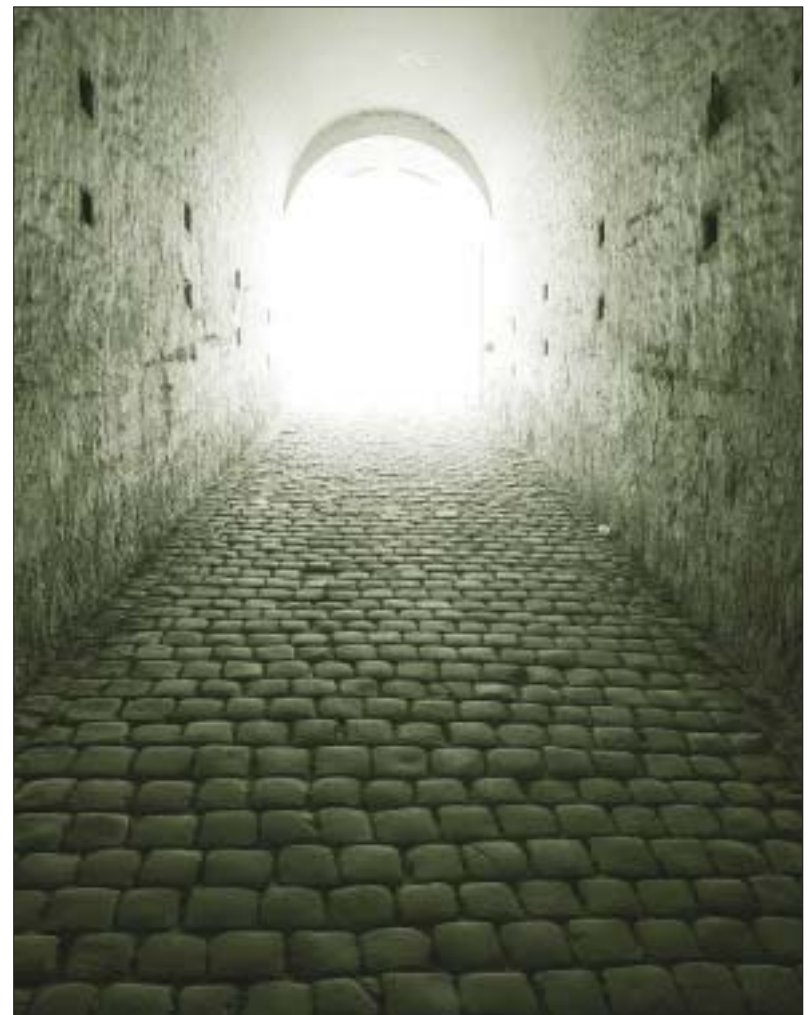
The company also says the better economy, as well as the significant saving it has made, should go some way towards recovering its performance, especially as the market appears to be regaining some level of optimism.

Senior partner Andy Martin said: "The year to April 30 we view as very much history, particularly as we have seen a good improvement in our recent results in particular the London residential team which has reported its strongest trading month ever in September."

"We, along with our competitors, faced a very tough trading environment with transactional business slowing for the last quarter of '08 and first quarter of '09. However, as with all diverse businesses, some parts performed exceptionally well whereas other parts struggled."

"Significant cost reductions and efficiencies were made during the year to adjust operating costs and these mean that as a firm we have a better platform for this market to enable us to continue to improve profitability."

"In financial terms, although it is too early to call the end of what has been the sharpest decline in values in living memory, the 2009/10 financial year has started better, with all areas of the business ahead of budgets at the six-month stage. We have maintained a high profile in our markets and have continued to build teams in important new areas of the business."



Sharp rise in empty homes 'reflects deprivation'



ACCORDING to the latest Halifax Empty Homes Survey, the number of private homes empty for at least six months soared by nine per cent during the year to April 2008.

The figure went up to 303,285, a level not seen since April 2003. The bank said the latest figures mean that 1.6 per cent of all privately-owned properties in England were empty.

Furthermore, the Halifax said when homes unoccupied for less than six months were included in the total, the figure rose to 613,270.

Properties are classed as being empty if they have been vacant for more than six months

because they are between occupants, undergoing modernisation, or in disrepair.

And the Halifax highlighted levels of deprivation were typically higher in areas that had a high proportion of vacant properties.

Suren Thiru, of the Halifax, said: "It is concerning that there are more than 300,000 private homes in England that have been empty for more than six months and the number has increased, following several years of decline."

"Often, high levels of long-term empty homes reflect relatively high levels of deprivation, low average earnings and high unemployment."

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- No forward chain.

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MOTORS NEWS



Increase in sales sees Jaguar bounding back

JAGUAR is showing its claws again after an impressive 50 per cent leap in November sales against the same month in 2008.

The XK coupé and well-received XF saloon (pictured) led the charge with sales up 78.4 and 149 per cent respectively.

Jaguar UK MD Geoff Cousins said: "The momentum for XF just keeps on going. We have now sold more XF models so far this year, in its second year in showrooms, than we did at the same point in 2008, when we launched."



Chevy pricing sparks a great deal for New Year

SPARKS are set to fly out of showrooms early in 2010, after news that Chevrolet's new city car will be little more expensive than the Matiz it replaces.

Assuming that VAT returns to 17.5 per cent at New Year as planned, the Spark starts at £6,495, for a state-of-the-art mini motor that has just gathered four stars overall and five for child protection in the Euro NCAP safety test.

Order books open next week for Spring delivery, so look for deals on the outgoing Matiz.



Hyundai gives its Ford Focus rival 2010 update

FAST-growing Hyundai has updated its impressive Ford Focus challenger for 2010.

Still backed by the Korean brand's standard five-year warranty, the i30 five-door and estate range (pictured) features new models, more kit and lower emissions. It goes on sale on January 4 priced from £12,000.

The Classic 1.6 CRDi costs £12,950 – a £1,140 price cut for the cheapest i30 diesel. 'Stop and Go' technology is available as a special order option on i30s to bring tax and fuel savings.



KEEPING TRACK: The Outlander's drive options should outclass rivals such as the Toyota RAV4 and Honda CR-V with the added extra of locking the car in front-wheel for economy

Outlander gains firm acceptance this time

CURIOUS how two generations of Mitsubishi Outlander have suited the name in contrasting ways.

The original (2004-07) probably invented the term 'crossover' by mixing off-roader and chunky estate, but was doomed to be an 'outlander' with UK buyers – a dipsomaniac 2.0-litre petrol engine was the only power option.

However, its successor fits the Outlander name as Mitsubishi intended, suggesting suitability for life in the country or on the frontier.

It is also offered with two diesel options as well as another thirsty petrol unit, which we'll ignore after this.

The 2.0 DI-D SE (£19,999 and entry model for range) test car has a proven 140bhp VW diesel that can be coarse under acceleration, but pulls well and cruises smoothly thanks to a slick six-speed 'box.

The alternative is a 154bhp 2.2-litre and I know this is impressive too, having tried it in the Mitsi's Citroën C-Crosser and Peugeot 4007 cloned sisters.

The 2.0-litre Mitsubishi is the cheapest diesel though, starting at £19,999 and now with more standard kit.

ROAD TEST MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER

BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Green rating	★★★★★

Would-be Toyota RAV4 and Honda CR-V buyers should also check it out for the ace up its sleeve – a no-cost option of two extra though basic seats.

While I could not test it, the Mitsi's various drive options should outclass the above rivals in gentle off-roading too.

The driver can lock the car in front-wheel drive for economy, though this allows scrambling if you accelerate too enthusiastically on damp or loose surfaces.

So the preferred default is '4WD auto' – fixed format with most 'soft-roaders' – which is essentially front-wheel drive too, but rear wheels automatically add drive and grip if a loss of traction is sensed at the front; '4WD Lock' does what it says, locking drive to all four wheels for muddy tracks, fields or snowfalls.

Like most 4x4s though, Outlander owners will rarely ask it to flex its muscles, so simply being a classy drive is a big plus; body roll is well controlled for a high vehicle and the car grips and rides with great composure.

It is also a handy MPV too with plenty of stowage and a serious cargo area when all rear seats are folded – this is also easily loaded via a split tailgate.



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Model shown has optional VXR Styling Pack One (£800 incl. fitting and VAT) and optional 17-inch twin spoke alloy wheels (£310 incl. fitting and VAT). Finance by GMAC UK plc, PO Box 6666, Cardiff CF15 7YT, applicants must be aged 18 or over. UK supplied vehicles only. *Payable with the first Monthly Payment. **Payable with the final Monthly Payment. Fully Comprehensive Insurance subject to eligibility, status, terms and conditions at participating retailers only. Offer only applies to private individuals, Vauxhall Partners and Pack Sales. All other sales categories are excluded. Corsa SXi drivers must be aged between 19-80 and will need to have held a full UK/EU driving licence for at least 2 years. A compulsory excess of £250 will apply. Please note that additional excesses do apply in respect of young drivers and modifications. Vauxhall Insurance underwritten by Provident Insurance plc (Free Insurance Offer in Northern Ireland is underwritten by AXA Insurance Limited) authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. The free involuntary redundancy cover is optional and is offered to customers who take out a finance agreement with GMAC from a participating Financial Services Authority authorised retailer. The cover, which is subject to eligibility, is for the first 24 months of the finance agreement (excluding the first 90 days, and is up to a maximum of 12 monthly payments). Terms and conditions apply (see retailer for further details of cover). The insurance is provided by Finance Insurance Company Limited. Other providers of redundancy cover are available, for more information see www.money.made.clear.fsa.gov.uk. £2000 Government Scrappage Allowance is dependent on the vehicle meeting the full Government Scrappage incentive criteria. The Government Scrappage payment applies to cars first registered in the United Kingdom on or before 29.02.00 when traded in against a new car subject to conditions and whilst Government funding applies. All offers excl. Free Insurance (see above) are available to private individuals, Vauxhall Partners and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only). Take delivery before the 31st December to beat the VAT increase. All other sales categories are excluded. Offers may not apply to all Retailer stocks. Offers apply to selected new vehicles ordered or registered between 16.10.09 and 02.12.09, and are subject to status, eligibility, terms and conditions. Offers may not apply to all retailer stocks and are available at participating retailers only. (Vaux82633)

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AGILA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2005	55	Agila Expression	10	5	Star silver	24,800	3,695
2008	58	Agila Club A/c	12	5	Steel Silver	4,385	7,995
2009	09	Agila Design Auto	12	5	Sugar white	2,290	9,695
2009	09	Agila Design	12	5	Lemon grass	4,150	8,995
2009	09	Agila Design CDTi	13D	5	Atlanta blue	6,230	9,995
2009	09	Agila Design CDTi	13D	5	Star silver	5,210	9,995

ASTRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2006	06	Astra Sxi	1.6	3	Black sapphire	30,000	7,995
2006	56	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.6	3	Panacotta	21,950	8,995
2006	56	Astra Active	1.6	5	Silver lightening	36,800	7,495
2007	57	Astra Sri Ex Pack	1.8	5	Black sapphire	26,000	9,495
2007	57	Astra Design Auto	1.8	5	Moonland	7,825	9,495
2008	08	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Black sapphire	15,890	9,495
2008	08	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.4	3	Flame red	11,225	10,495
2008	58	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Green spirit	3,725	10,495
2008	58	Astra Sri X Pack	1.8	3	Black sapphire	5,960	12,495
2009	09	Astra Breeze Plus	1.6	5	Metro blue	5,950	9,995
2009	09	Astra Breeze CDTi	17D	5	Metro blue	4,720	10,895
2009	09	Astra Breeze CDTi	17D	5	Silver lightening	7,190	10,845
2009	09	Astra Breeze Sports hatch	17D	3	Black sapphire	6,250	11,695
2009	09	Astra Sxi	1.4	5	Flame red	2,500	9,995

CORSA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2000	X*	Corsa Comfort Auto	14	3	Star silver	69,325	2,995
2006	56	Corsa Design	14	5	Silver lightening	39,050	5,995
2007	57	Corsa Design	12	3	Air blue	21,575	7,495
2007	57	Corsa Design CDTi	13D	5	Air blue	25,800	8,495
2008	57	Corsa VXR	16	3	Arden blue	14,950	12,995
2008	08	Corsa Breeze	12	3	Star silver	12,220	7,995
2008	58	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	13	5	Silver lightening	12,775	9,495
2008	58	Corsa Design CDTi	13	3	Metro blue	6,425	9,495
2009	58	Corsa Sxi A/c	14	5	Metro blue	11,390	8,995
2008	58	Corsa Sxi A/c	14	5	Black sapphire	7,070	9,295
2009	09	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/C	13	3	Black sapphire	9,670	9,650
2009	09	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	13	3	Flame red	9,270	9,650
2009	09	Corsa Active	12	5	Silver lightening	6,520	8,995
2009	09	Corsa Sxi	12	3	Black sapphire	6,236	9,495
2009	09	Corsa Design In Touch	12	3	Black sapphire	3,380	9,495

INSIGNIA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2006	56	Signum Elite Auto CDTi	19D	5	Misty grey	51,685	8,995
2009	58	Insignia Elite Auto Nav	2.0	5	Star silver	6,300	19,995
2009	09	Insignia S Tourer Exc (160)	19D	5	Panacotta	12,000	16,995
2009	09	Insignia Elite CDTi Auto (160)	19D	4	Black sapphire	8,250	22,995
2009	09	Insignia S Tourer Exc (160)	19D	5	Silver lightening	5,925	17,495

MERIVA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2003	53*	Meriva Enjoy	1.6	5	Star silver	86,875	3,495
2006	56	Meriva Life A/C	1.4	5	Steel blue	19,730	6,995
2007	57	Meriva Design CDTi	17D	5	Star silver	34,950	8,995
2008	58	Meriva CDTi Breeze Plus	1.3	5	Black sapphire	10,930	9,995
2009	09	Meriva Active CDTi	13D	5	Ultra blue	8,750	10,695

TIGRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2006	06	Tigra Exclusiv	1.4	2	Air blue	30,500	8,995

VECTRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2006	06	Vectra elite CDTi (150)	19D	5	Black Sapphire	38,125	8,995
2006	56	Vectra Exclusiv	1.8	5	Star silver	26,250	6,495
2007	07	Vectra Exclusiv CDTi Auto	19D	5	Silver lightening	19,350	8,995
2008	58	Vectra Exclusive	1.8	5	Black sapphire	15,390	9,995
2008	58	Vectra Exclusive CDTi	19D	5	Black sapphire	12,700	10,695

ZAFIRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2004	54*	Zafira Design DTi	2.0D	5	Prestige blue	67,850	5,495
2005	05*	Zafira Design CDTi	19D	5	Star silver	66,000	7,795
2006	56	Zafira Club	1.6	5	Metro blue	40,250	7,995
2006	56	Zafira Club Auto	1.8	5	Silver lightening	12,120	8,495
2009	09	Zafira Sri XP CDTi	19D	5	Star silver	3,780	17,995

OTHER MAKES

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2005	55*	Ford Focus Zetec	1.6	5	Metallic grey	53,050	6,295

DUE SOON

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2007	57	Vectra CDTi Elite (150ps)	19D	5	Black sapphire	41,000	9,995
2008	58	Astra Sri S hatch CDTi 150ps	19D	3	Power red	16,000	13,495
2008	58	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Flame red	12,000	10,495
2007	57	Meriva Design CDTi	17D	5	Star silver	34,950	8,995

All mileages are approximate, as vehicles are still in use at the present time

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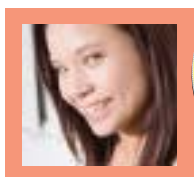
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WOMEN seeking men

AS GOOD AS IT GETS Bubbly chatty female, 25, 5'3", nice personality, loves singing, music, socialising, pubs, reading, cinema, meals out; seeks attractive black male 37-43 for fun and laughter. Leeds. Box 321556

GOOD THING GOING Professional female, 29, enjoys football, badminton, cinema & socialising, seeks fun, outgoing, honest & caring male. Leeds. Box 648195

HERE'S HOPING Blue-eyed girl, 31, friendly, outgoing, loves the outdoors and meals out, enjoys meeting new people, looking for friendship maybe a relationship. Box 475762

YOURS TRULY Voluptuous lady, 30, blonde, blue eyes, likes poetry, theme parks, nights in, walking, live bands, seeks a loving man to settle down with. York. Box 459589

IT MUST BE LOVE Single mum, 31, student, enjoys running, swimming, camping, going out/staying in, looking for nice down-to-earth bloke, single dads welcome- must be a non-smoker. Bradford. Box 865407

READY FOR THIS? 34yrs, 5ft 7ins, blonde hair, green eyes, cute, friendly, fun, generous single girl for over a year now. Ready to find someone special. Box 874273

BE MINE Single, outgoing female, 34, 5'11", looking for a nice, easygoing guy to share fun times and maybe more. Selby. Box 458161

IN THE CARDS Very social woman, 35, 5'3", blonde hair, green eyes, likes the outdoors, cinema, looking for friendship and more. Bradford. Box 460554

CALL ME! Single mum, 35, 5ft, blonde hair, seeking a good honest gentleman with decent values and a positive outlook for a lasting relationship. York. Box 461168

WHO KNOWS? Single mum, 35, looking for a single dad to share some time with, maybe it could be something lasting? I like cooking, socialising, outdoors. York. Box 868730

GET THE PHONE Quite attractive female, 36, 5'11", average build, blonde, enjoys live music, pub quizzes & holidays, seeks tall, dark-haired male, for all this & more. York. Box 721088

SOUND GOOD? Fun-loving female, 36, 5'4", medium build, sporty, shy, likes dogs, looking for a male company. Bradford. Box 460660

ONE IN A MILLION Friendly, single mum, 5ft, brown eyes/dark hair. I like cinema, bowling, gigs nights out. Looking for a genuine bloke for friendship...maybe more later. Halifax. Box 457076

HOLD MY HAND Shy lady, 35, 5ft5, dark hair and eyes, single, likes going out, pictures, music and more, seeks similar male for hopeful romance. Box 457149

HEELS & WELLIES Honest, independent female, 37, 5'7", blonde, attractive, n/s, likes meals out, walks, country pubs, wine bars, seeks like minded male for relationship. Malton. Box 762305

SHOW ME HEAVEN Brunette, 37, green eyes, likes socialising and meals in quiet pubs, WLTm a kind and caring man, 37-45. Leeds. Box 869944

COUNTRY LOVER Hi, I'm an attractive, intelligent woman, with a wicked sense of humour. I'm 38, 5ft7, dark hair/blue eyes, and live in Bishop Auckland. Box 453919

A LADY TO LOVE Yorkshire lass, 40, a mum, blonde with blue eyes, 5ft5, medium build, loves swimming, eating out and dancing, WLTm genuine fun-loving male. Box 452268

HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU

Bubbly lady, 39, 5ft2, medium length blonde hair/blue eyes, slim, very GSOH, loves DVDs, cinema and all music; seeks likewise male for good times...Bishop Auckland. Box 460583

TWO TO TANGO Well travelled, smart, sprightly mum of one, 42, 5ft11, dark hair with blue eyes, hard working woman, looking for a independent, tall, like minded man. Selby. Box 459923

RECIPE FOR LOVE Country Durham female, 42, medium build, glasses, blonde hair. I'm a widow and would like to meet a genuine man. I enjoy cooking, swimming, shopping. Box 461220

MOVING ON UP Hi there I'm a 42 year old swimmer, love shopping, am a widow, just looking for someone to share my life with again. Crook. Box 455146



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A BETTER TOMORROW Interesting woman, 42, medium build, 5ft4, blonde/blue eyes. I enjoy music, cinema, nights out, countryside, sports, cosy nights in, WLTm animal-loving gent, with similar tastes. Malton. Box 461256

MAIN INTERESTS Single, black mum, 5ft6, medium build, 43, brown eyes/black hair. I'm hoping to meet someone for friendship, and hopefully LTR. Box 453905

PUPPY LOVE? Fun loving & caring 43 year old looking for my soulmate, enjoys socialising, meals out & weekends away, looking for genuine male for friendship...hopefully more! Box 876111

HELLO! Attractive female, 43, 5ft5, brown hair/eyes, enjoy spending time with friends, looking for a tall, genuine guy, 35-45, for a meaningful relationship. Bradford. Box 462457

BETWEEN US Beautiful female, 44, 5ft3, blonde, blue eyes, slim build, likes sports, music, eating out, reading, looking for a genuine male for friendship and more. Keighley. Box 455173

GENUINE AND RESPECTFUL 45yr old woman, dark hair/eyes, medium build. I like walking, countryside. Seeking man with a GSOH and good personality, someone honest and genuine. Box 455309

LOOKING FOR A DANCE PARTNER 45 year old friendly lady who loves to do many different things including dancing, cinema, theatre, quizzes, days and nights in or out. York area. Box 868052

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HERE AND NOW Hello I'm a 45 year old female, on my own for 3 years, warm, honest, enjoy lots of activities, well built and looking for romance. Box 864906

FINGERS CROSSED Female smoker, 45, likes reading, TV, films; WLTm guy with GSOH who likes animals. Bishop Auckland. Box 458690

SHALL WE BE SOCIAL? Slim female, 45, 5'10", blonde, enjoys dog walks, car boots, meals out & socialising, seeks male 4+, similar interests, for friendship maybe more. York. Box 972442

BY MY SIDE Brunette, medium build, brown eyes, I'm a 44yr old woman and enjoy going out, nights in, late dancing and socialising. Bradford. Box 457198

FOR GOOD SHY Lady, 44, gosh, likes line dancing, cinema and socialising, looking for a man with similar interests for friendship/relationship. Bradford. Box 457536

MAKE A MOVE Hello I'm a lady in darlington county Durham. I like dancing and music looking for a fun man that has the right moves. Box 457867

BE YOURSELF Blonde woman, 46, blue eyes, enjoys dining out, holidays, cosy nights in, looking for an honest, fun and genuine male. York. Box 461391

MOVE OVER, DARLING Recently divorced female (not bitter!), 47, loves animals, walks and more, seeks male with GSOH who's genuine and up for love. Darlington. Box 460428

HOPING 4 YOU Sincere, caring female, 47, own home, loves indoor sports and the outdoors, seeks decent fella, to share quality time, laughter and perhaps romance. Box 456219

WANT TO KNOW MORE? Seeking that special someone, a loving, caring, honest man, I'm an attractive woman, 47, 5ft1, with blonde hair. Alerton (Bradford). I love travel, dancing and walking. Box 458192

HURT IN THE PAST Lovely, bubbly woman, 48, divorced, grown up kids. Looking for genuine, loving, tall man. Box 457533

ONLY YOU Tall and attractive blonde, 48, divorced, well dressed, looking for a tall and handsome guy, 41-52. I like music, holidays and weekends away. York. Box 461476

WITHOUT YOU Divorced woman, 48, 5'7", blonde hair, blue eyes, likes reading, walking, music, nights in and out, seeks caring, honest male for friendship and more. Box 927648

R U THE 1 A ME? Bubbly but a little bit shy woman, 49, likes socialising, eating out, concerts, cinema, looking for a male to get to know better. Halifax. Box 457378

GENUINE AND SINCERE? Hi, I'm Anne, 49, brown eyes and dark hair, slim, hard working, likes socialising, pubs, love dancing; WLTm someone to enjoy a meal and whom...York. Box 456448

A WHOLE NEW WORLD Cuddly brunette, 50, 5ft7, gosh, likes walking, dog owner, loves music, looking for a happy man with gosh to start again with. Darlington. Box 871616

NO TIME WASTERS PLEASE Animal lover with two dogs, 50, 5ft1, blue eyes, slim, loves outdoor/lam life, cuddles and music, Wltm a man to settle down with. County Durham. Box 455269

NORTHERN STAR 48yr old female, olive skin, likes socialising, the odd drink, lots of love to give for the right man-must be asian/middle eastern. Bradford. Box 454880

LET'S TALK Slim attractive female, 51, 5'5, Honest, loyal and caring. Lives in Darlington. Smoker. Loves music, films, reading and holidays. Looking for friendship and possible LTR. Box 872620

SEEKING SOUL MATE Seeking a single man, caring, honest and romantic. I enjoy holidays abroad, eating out. I'm very laid back woman (52), and looking for similar. Bradford. Box 873033

THIS WAY... Attractive female, 51, 5ft10, brunette, medium build, very GSOH, loves music, stand-up comedy, music, cinema and dogs! Seeks like-minded tall males for friendship/relationship. Newton Aycliffe. Box 462866

FROM ME TO YOU Loving sharing lady, 51, 5ft3, long dark hair, likes most things in life, WLTm someone special to enjoy life and fun with. Selby. Box 456493

GOSH! Lovely lady, 51, very young outgoing, positive, bubbly, short bobbed hair, attractive, very GSOH, loves getting out and about, seeks likewise tall male for companionship. Box 457315

MY MIND ON YOU Bubbly lady, 51, 5ft6, blonde, slim, looking to meet a guy who likes travel and meals out for initial friendship and then more. Bradford. Box 459834

ZEST FOR LIFE Slim female, 52, blonde, loves walking, keeping fit, lovely holidays, dining out, seeking a trusting, affectionate, and caring male. Box 461613

SHOW YOU CARE Honest, caring female, 54, slim build, blonde, N/S, GSOH, likes the countryside & animals, seeks tall, caring guy, for nights in & out. Darlington. Box 467547

MAKING THE MOST OF IT Professional 54yr old female, 5ft7, friendly, outgoing, medium build, loves animals, meals out, holidays abroad, WLTm a tall gent, solvent, for company and more. Bradford. Box 462678

SOCIAL SORT Friendly female, a mum, with a GSOH, I'm 54, 5ft1, and love animals, meals out, swimming etc...WLTm genuine man to socialise with. York. Box 461902

THE SOCIABLE SORT Sociable lady, 54, likes good conversations, always up for a laugh, looking for a like-minded guy to hang out with. Huddersfield. Box 457368

LOOKING FOR TLC Lady in her 50's, blonde hair/blue eyes, kind, caring, romantic, likes meals out and cinema, seeking a good guy that enjoys to enjoy a meal and whom...York. Box 456448

COME INTO MY WORLD Fun-loving, independent, young at heart lady, 58, enjoy travelling, walking and swimming, WLTm a similar man for friendship, possibly leading to a LTR. Bradford. Box 461152

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MUST LOVE LIFE Fun-loving female, 59, 5'4", fair hair, medium build, gosh, enjoys films, music, seeks an easy going man 50-62, who is kind and caring. York. Box 393904

LOVE AND AFFECTION Romantic, affectionate, young looking female, 59, 5ft2, slim. I like cooking, meals out, country drives, WLTm genuine, non-smoking gent. Darlington area. Box 456392

STILL SEARCHING... A libra, I'm a genuine lady, 58, 5ft2, looking for genuine man to share my life with. Are you out there? Box 457515

HELP ME FIND LOVE AGAIN Compassionate lady, 60, works in medicine, lots of love to give, seeks a kind and considerate male in the Shipley, Bradford, or Lancashire area. Box 461955

ATTRACTIVE, Tall, stylish, happy, young 60yr old, n/s, gosh, seeks honest, caring non-smoker, similar age, retired or semi retired, for happy time together. York. Box 456571

HOW CAN WE BE WRONG? Attractive, lively, sociable lady, 60, 5'2", younger in looks and personality, loves dancing, theatre, cinema, quizzes and travelling, would like companionship and fun. County Durham. Box 875882

FRIENDSHIP FIRST Slim, smart, attractive lady, 62, 5'2", no ties, works, own home and car, likes live music, dining out, good conversation, seeking a genuine, similar lady. Darlington. Box 461939

CUDDLES NEEDED 63 yr old, N/S, redhead, many interests including gardening and sewing would like to meet male 60+ for friendship and maybe more. Box 875863

HOPING TO HEAR... Attractive lady, blonde, 60, nice personality, enjoys most things, seeks male, 56-70, for a warm, caring friendship/relationship. Box 876574

ANIMAL LOVER Widow, 65, looking for gent, 55-65 for friendship, maybe more. I'm petite, with blonde hair and I love dogs and enjoy cosy nights in/meal out. Bradford. Box 460520

IN PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS Tacile female, 60s, youthful and attractive, WLTm smart, active, social, sincere male, 60s, to share interests in music, dancing, travel and much more. County Durham. Box 455943

JUST FRIENDS Looking for a friend, I'm a 66yr old woman, with a love animal, I enjoy camping/caravanning, holidays, meals out, and just looking for male company. Baldon. Box 456385

OWEN CALL PAM Owen, North Yorks, who responded to Pam, please get back in touch as she took down your number incorrectly. Thanks. Box 533589

LET'S GET MOVING Happy female, 68, into salsa dancing & travel, seeks genuine gent, 60s, for relationship & travel. Skipton. Box 52187

LOVE AT LAST Young-looking and acting lady, 69, 5'3", blue eyes, blonde, looking for a nice, nonsmoking gentleman for companionship and more. Wetherby. Box 461163

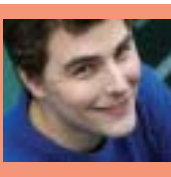
Women seeking men

A DAY OUT 22yr old female, 5ft, likes pubs, clubs, reading, socialising, WLTm like-minded female, N/S, for fun-loving relationship. Bradford. Box 454911

ONE STEP AT A TIME Nice woman in Shipley, I'm 28, 5ft5, brown eyes, looking for a similar female. I like going out and trying new things. Box 457058

A BIT OF A DIFFERENCE 41yr old slim, attractive female, blonde, very down-to-earth, enjoy days out, meals out, walks, spiritualism, animals, WLTm a like-minded, homely, feminine female. Bradford. Box 455788

SAY YOU'LL BE THERE Feminine slim female, 43, 5ft5, blonde, blue eyes, likes good conversations, shopping, seeking a sweet female for fun and friendship. Bradford. Box 456633



MEN seeking women

MAYBE BABY Bradford male, 34, medium build, 5ft8, black hair, looking for a nice female for friendship, maybe a relationship. I enjoy going for walks, cinema etc. Box 462815

GENTS PREFER BLONDES American male, 34, looking for a nice, loving lady, prefer blondes with a nice figure, for fun times. Box 462911

BY THE FIRE Easygoing, friendly single dad, 35, enjoys football, winebars, eating out, holidays & cosy nights in, looking for fun-loving, easygoing female for a brighter future. Beverley. Box 462478

LET'S SEE Good-looking asian male, 36, looking for a nice asian female to get to know better and see how things go. Bradford. Box 462814

PERFECT FIT? Shy, stocky lad, 58" would like to meet someone special with the same interests, I like football, dvds fishing, cooking, country walks and pubs. Box 869095

SHOW ME AROUND Male new to Scarborough area, 38, self employed and works hard, likes travelling, seeks lady to travel with and hopefully find love. Box 869437

A BIT SHY... Professional 37yr old man, 5ft11, bit of a belly, gosh, into music, playing the guitar, looking to meet a lady of similar age. York. Box 460016

CUDDLES ON OFFER Bradford bloke, 38, 5ft9, brown hair/eyes, likes cars, motorsports, going to the picture, seeking a genuine female for a serious relationship. Box 459581

FIELDS OF GOLD Good-looking male, 38, into going out, keeping fit, reading, days out, countryside & driving. Seeks nice, easy-going female, 28-45, for fun & romance. Bradford. Box 148700

A HIGHER LOVE Well-travelled male, 37, 6'5", likes swimming, walking, cinema, restaurants, nights in/out & world travel, WLTm female for friendship, perhaps more. York. Box 301864

MISS THIS, MISS OUT Good-looking man, 40, into martial arts, seeking lady for nights out, evenings in, good conversations and hopefully a LTR. Bradford. Box 870955

MAYBE THIS TIME Hi, I'm David, 39, 5ft9, a bit shy, gosh, likes music, cinema, walking, WLTm a non-smoking female, 30-39, for a lasting relationship. Box 454836

EXPRESS YOURSELF Honest male, 41, dog-lover, likes socialising, cinema, reading & walks, seeks honest lady for honest expression of feelings & more. York. Box 911015

TRUE ROMANCE Male, 41 looking for a lady to share nights in and out with. I'm into travel and seeking possible long term relationship. York. Box 867421

SHY GUY Caring, loving male, 40, own home, GSOH, likes pool/snooker, football, pubs, clubs, beach walks, seeks genuine female for LTR. Bradford. Box 458366

READY FOR LOVE? Nice guy looking for nice lady...I'm 41, very outgoing, humorous with positive outlook, many normal interests, seeking lady of any description to get to know...Bradford. Box 461380

TABLE FOR TWO Attractive asian male, 42, long hair, likes good wine, keeping fit, clubbing, looking for a nice female to share nice evenings out with. Box 456746

SING YOUR HEART OUT I'm male, 43, 5ft8, slim, blue/green eyes. I love music, drawing/painting, films, meals out, cosy nights in. Bradford. Seeking nice female, preferably a singer. Box 462238

MAKE A FRIEND Male with a gosh, 43, seeking a fun lady 43-50 in Bradford. Box 461299

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FOLLOW THE SUN Caring, honest male, 43, 6ft, loves going out, movies, restaurants, sunshine & travel, seeks genuine female, age unimportant, for companionship+. York. Box 393904

THE SEARCH Divorced white male, 45, looking for fun times with a lovely female. Cleckheaton. Box 462902

LET'S DO IT, LET'S FALL IN LOVE! Fun-loving 45yr old self-employed man, like football, socialising, pubs/clubs, looking for a woman who is fun to be with and knows how to enjoy life. Box 458293

NO TIME TO WASTE Active male, 44, medium build, 5'7", non-smoker, blue eyes, like meals out, a drink, seeking a woman, 30-42, for friendship, single mums welcome. Bradford. Box 460078

HERE WE GO Genuine honest guy, 45, 6ft2, slim-medium build with dark hair, n/s, likes nights in and out, seeks similar lady for love. Bradford. Box 459238

STARTING AGAIN Single-parent male, 46, GSOH, genuine, likes nights in/out, seeks caring female, age/looks unimportant for long-term relationship. Shipley. Box 693447

TRY ME 46yr old male, 5ft8, looking for a nice, slim girl to spend time with. I like football, films and going out. Box 455868

A HOME BIRD Handsome man, 5ft11, nice smile, no ties, n/s, caring, honest, romantic, enjoys music, sport, country/seaside, looking for a home-loving sincere female for a relationship. York. Box 454573

ENJOY YOURSELF Leeds lad, originally from Scotland. I'm looking for fun female who doesn't take life too serious. I'm 49, and I enjoy life. Box 456053

IS THAT YOU? Laid back guy, easygoing and quite attractive. I'm 50, and enjoy cinema, reading, holidays, music, WLTm honest, attractive, genuine lady in the York area. Box 459197

LIFE BEGINS NOW Divorced man, 56', 49 years old, love travel, dining out, I enjoy being out and about, caring and honest, looking for ladies in Bradford. Box 458450

SWEET LIKE CHOCOLATE Young looking 50, I'm a single, easy-going, genuine guy, no ties. I like nights in/out, sport, WLTm nice, honest woman in the West Yorkshire area. Box 460191

PERSONALITY COUNTS Smart male, 53, slim, fit and active, wears glasses, clean shaven, seeks African/Indian/Asian woman, 18-65, looks unimportant, for a good, happy life. Bradford. Box 460811

YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING Level headed, broad minded, decent looking male, 53, WLTm a fun-loving, feminine female to wine, dine and woo. York. Box 867921

ALL TO COME Hi all I'm Dave, 55 from York, 5ft8, stocky, green eyes, short hair, hard working, like swimming and walks, WLTm social lady for potential romance. Box 459015

LOOKING FOR YOU! Loyal, active gent with a GSOH. I'm 58, down-to-earth and warm hearted. I like golf, keeping fit, trips away, pubs, meals etc. York based. Box 458868

MAKE A FRIEND Widowed gent, 58, 5ft4, GSOH, likes meals out, walks, films, music, cosy nights, gardening, seeking a similar woman for friendship. York. Box 461698

HI! Fun-loving male, 58, short, brown/gray hair, med build, 5ft7, looking for an attractive slim female for good times, maybe something long term. Box 864813

STEP-UP! Widow dad, 58, 5ft5, GSOH, likes meals out, walks, films, music, cosy nights, gardening and dancing. WLTm warm-hearted woman for LTR. York. Box 875848

TIME TO MOVE ON Genuine male, 55, large build, enjoys meals out, holidays, pub quizzes, seeks friendly, attractive female, for an honest relationship. Box 801281

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Tracy Morgan, Telesales Manager,
KOS Media Ltd, Apple Barn, Hythe Road,
Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR
Or email tracy.morgan@kosmedia.co.uk



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CV's to: pat.slater@regentgroup.co.uk tel: 01322 626240

Or post to:

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Mandy Oliver

East Kent Medical Services Ltd

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MidKent College

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Salary: £30,204 - £32,865 per annum

ESOL Programme Area Leader Ref: P0153

Salary: £30,204 - £32,865 per annum

We are looking to recruit exceptional candidates for the above roles to provide support to the Head of Faculty on all Staffing, Student, Curriculum and Quality issues. The successful candidates will be able to demonstrate a significant level of competence in Teaching and Learning, and have good negotiating/communication skills. The post holders will hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Lecturer in Engineering/ Civil Engineering Ref: P0678

Salary: £22,653 - £27,476 per annum

We are looking to recruit an outstanding individual to teach and participate in the development of programmes across the Faculty which includes Electronic, Electrical, Mechanical Engineering and Civil Engineering disciplines. The successful candidate will possess qualities of reliability, have good communication skills and hold an HNC/HND/Foundation degree or higher in one or more of the above Engineering specialisms. Previous industry experience is essential. The ideal candidate will hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

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Quality Administrator Ref: P0383

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Salary: £15,607 - £17,750 pro rata

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Customer Service Advisor Ref: P0375

Salary: £15,225 - £17,402 per annum

We are looking for an exceptional individual to provide a comprehensive and efficient front-line service to the College students, staff and visitors. The successful candidate will be responsible for supporting the smooth running of the College reception. The ideal candidate will have excellent communication skills.

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Salary: £18,433 - £22,367 pro rata

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Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer



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Pictures: IGOR KUPCO



DEFEAT: Andy Nellies was beaten twice as Gore Court came unstuck at Ashford

Derby defeat sees Court ousted from top spot

Ashford 2 Gore Court 0

GORE Court suffered only their second defeat of the season as Ashford took the derby spoils to knock Court off top spot in South Hockey Premier Division Two.

Barnes' incredible 6-5 win at West Hampstead saw them leapfrog Paul Surridge's side and results elsewhere left the top of the table looking extremely congested.

Just four points now separate the top six sides, with Ashford now two points behind Court thanks to Saturday's win.

HOCKEY

Goals from Paul Cheap and Andy Hill were enough to secure victory, with Court – and leading scorer Aaron Glass – failing to score in a match for the first time this season.

This weekend's fixtures now take on huge significance, with Court looking to take three points from their home game against Milton Keynes while Barnes entertain third-placed Eastbourne.

The Court ladies' first XI played their part in an entertaining 3-3 draw at home to

Broxbourne, but the draw did not benefit either side as both remained entrenched in the lower reaches of East Hockey's Division One South.

However, a victory against Southend on Saturday would see Court draw level on points with the Essex side in mid-table.

The ladies' 3rds were unfortunate to lose 1-0 to Dartford's 1st XI as the Darts maintained their unbeaten league record. The game was tightly fought throughout and Court produced several fine team moves but they were unable to find the equaliser their play merited.

Pictures: IGOR KUPCO



RETURN: Ben Taylor's Norton Sports are back in action on Saturday after three weeks without a game

Norton aim to prove a point in trophy tie

BEN Taylor says his Norton Sports side have something to prove when they travel to Deal Town for their Kent Senior Trophy tie on Saturday.

The teams were due to meet in the league on November 14, but the weather dictated otherwise and the match was called off ten minutes before kick-off.

Following a 3-0 win at Fisher a week later, player-manager Taylor then saw games against Sevenoaks and Erith Town postponed due to bad weather and pitch unavailability.

He said: "It's frustrating because it sums our season up. We had a tough start against the top teams and we've been hit with injuries since then.

"We'd just got a run going, with away wins against Sevenoaks, Hythe and Fisher and we were looking forward to continuing the run, but there's nothing we could do.

"Deal have beaten us the last two times we've played them so we've got something to prove. I don't know why it took so long to call the game off the last time we went there – if it had been our pitch, I would have taken one look and realised it wasn't playable."

Only three points separate Norton and Deal in the Kent League Premier Division and Taylor admits he would rather not have another cup fixture to set them further behind the pack.

However, the manager said he was more than happy to be on the road once again, as Norton have struggled to get results at Winch's Field, taking four points from a possible 18.

He said: "We don't seem to be able to win on [Herne Bay's] ground – it's a big pitch that doesn't really suit our style of play. We're hard-working and compact so we tend to do better when we go away from home and play on smaller pitches."



VICTORY: Lee Shearer (left) scored the second of Faversham's three goals at Sevenoaks to the delight of manager, Justin Luchford (right)



Pictures: NICK DUNGAN

Lilywhites regain lead at the top after mid-season wobble

FAVERSHAM regained their ten-point cushion at the top of the Kent League as they rediscovered their scoring touch at fourth-placed Sevenoaks Town.

The Lilywhites, who had been suffering a minor wobble after two defeats and a draw, could have gone behind inside 30 seconds when Joe Creasey's 40-yard thunderbolt crashed off Rob French's post and rebounded to safety.

The reprieve seemed to spark Town into life and they went ahead in the 14th minute through top-scorer Buster Smissen. Dan Larkin climbed well to meet Dale Skelton's corner and his bullet header was diverted beyond Sean Funnell by Smissen, who now has ten goals in the bag for the season.

Faversham exerted their dominance for the remainder of the half, although a nagging frustration began to creep into the players as they failed to add to their lead.

Sevenoaks came close to an equaliser twice after the break, with Joe Minter's effort cleared off the line, before Chris Walker became the second player to strike the frame of French's goal.

FOOTBALL

■ BY STEVE TERTVET

Sevenoaks Town 0

Faversham Town 3

Smissen 14, Shearer 70 pen, Skelton 79

However, the game was wrapped up with two further Faversham goals in the space of nine minutes as the game neared its end.

Lee Shearer converted a penalty with 20 minutes remaining after Tom Hickman had been felled in the box and Dale Skelton then produced a moment of magic for Town's third.

Cutting in from the right wing, he unleashed a left-footed drive which sailed beyond the dive of Funnell and flew into the top corner to mark his return to the side in the best possible fashion.

With Erith & Belvedere losing 3-2 at Greenwich Borough and Herne Bay's game at home to Lordswood falling foul of the weather,

Faversham starting XI



Subs used: Tanner (Soutan 60), Sinden (Abel 80), Eastwood (Hamshire 80)

Town's win sent them well clear at the top but manager Justin Luchford insists he is not concerned by the form of Faversham's rivals.

He said: "I'm not too fussed – I don't manage Erith & Belvedere, Herne Bay or Hythe Town so I'm not worried by what they're doing. We've kept another clean sheet and we've got one game to go before Christmas, so that's all that's important to me.

"If Sevenoaks had got that goal inside a minute, we would have been up against it because they're a good side. It was a while since we'd scored first so there was a monkey on our back but we've got rid of it now."

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Abbott lost for words as strikers fluff their lines

FOOTBALL

BY STEVE Tervet

Walton & Hersham 1

Lock 29

Sittingbourne 0



GARY Abbott left Surrey perplexed after seeing his Sittingbourne side dominate for long spells but fail to take anything away from a game they could easily have won.

The Brickies boss felt his team should have been awarded a first-half penalty with the score at 0-0, but admitted a failure to take chances had once again cost come back to haunt them.

He said: "It was a great performance, I can't fault the players. We started so well and we should have been out of sight after 20 minutes. They had one shot and they scored, and even then it was our own fault – we didn't mark properly.

"However, if you don't put your chances away, you get punished and that's the way it was. The referee missed a clear penalty for a foul on Elie [Kayembe] – the linesman was right in line but he couldn't make the decision.

"Linesmen don't give referees enough help – he was in a better position than the referee



Picture: KEN MEDWYN

CHANCES: Sittingbourne striker Elie Kayembe missed several scoring opportunities at Walton & Hersham

which is what makes it so frustrating.

"We should have come away with three points, which would have lifted us up the table, but we've ended up dropping down and that puts us under more pressure."

Kayembe should have given Sittingbourne an 11th-minute lead when he found himself clean through, but he fluffed his lines and Delroy Preddie saved easily.

The referee then missed a clear trip as the forward surged into the area, and despite a flurry of corners, the Brickies were unable to turn their pressure into an opener.

The Walton winner came against the run of

Sittingbourne starting XI



Subs used: Brady (Kayembe 72)

play in the 29th minute. A hopeful punt into the Sittingbourne box seemed harmless but Matt Bourne and Ashley Grant got in each other's way and Kevin Lock snuck in to beat Deren Ibrahim.

The second-half saw the hosts looking more comfortable as they closed out the win, but Abbott and Sittingbourne have bigger problems than on-field performances, with the club threatened with closure unless crowds increase or a wealthy backer is found.

Abbott said: "All the players can do is go out and get three points, but on the other side of it, I do worry it because I've got four kids to support. It's so hard because I can't attract players – I've got a squad of 17 or 18 and they are on less than £30 a game."

Admission to Saturday's match against Fleet Town at Bourne Park is free for everyone as the club opens its doors to try to attract new supporters.

Sittingbourne hosted Margate in the Championship Manager Cup last night. Log on to www.yoursware.co.uk for a match report.

FOOTBALL



Picture: IAN KIRK

POOR GATES: Attendances are averaging at around 120 at Bourne Park this season

Brickies face closure if fans continue to stay away, says Pitts

ONE of Kent's oldest senior football clubs faces extinction by the end of the season unless gates improve drastically, or a new financial backer is found.

Sittingbourne have been playing since 1886, but the club's financial situation is so acute that secretary John Pitts says they may be forced to fold.

"We've got a town with a population of 60,000 and we can't even get 150 through the gate," Pitts said.

Despite success on the field in the past two seasons under manager Gary Abbott, average attendances at Bourne Park have dropped from around the 250 mark two years ago to 120.

The club have announced free entry for Saturday's home game with Fleet Town in a bid to drum up support, but Pitts fears the measure may be too little too late, citing Bourne Park's poor location and the attraction of rival clubs.

"People have allegiances, to Charlton, Millwall, Gillingham and the Premier League clubs and are quite happy to spend £60 taking their family to a game, but a lot of them don't even know there is a senior football club in the town," Pitts said. "I can remember Sittingbourne at the old Bull Ground and people would come there after they'd done their shopping on a Saturday afternoon, but that's never going to happen at Bourne Park."

Unless the Brickies can persuade people to swap the 80-mile round trip to London for the three-mile round trip from the town centre to Bourne Park in substantial numbers, the club's resources will be stretched to breaking point.

Pitts said: "Caerns Sports [the site's owners] have been pretty good to us, but we're paying too much in rent, the electricity bill is £1,000 per month and then we've got to find the money to pay the players."

LEAGUE TABLES

(Not including midweek games)

RYMAN DIVISION ONE SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	Gd	Pt
1 Folkestone Invicta	19	13	5	1	+17	44
2 Worthing	20	14	1	5	+21	43
3 Godalming Town	18	12	2	4	+16	38
4 Walton & Hersham	19	11	4	4	+9	37
5 Croydon Athletic	17	9	5	3	+19	32
6 Fleet Town	18	10	2	6	+12	32
7 Ramsgate	18	8	4	6	+4	28
8 Merstham	18	8	4	6	+1	28
9 Chatham Town	20	8	3	9	-3	27
10 Dulwich Hamlet	19	6	7	6	0	25
11 Corinthian-Casuals	19	7	3	9	-3	24
12 Metropolitan Police	18	5	7	6	+5	22
13 Sittingbourne	16	6	4	6	+2	22
14 Leatherhead	16	6	3	7	+3	21
15 Burgess Hill Town	16	6	3	7	-1	21
16 Whyteleafe	19	6	2	11	0	20
17 Walton Casuals	18	5	4	9	-7	19
18 Horsham YMCA	18	4	7	7	-12	19
19 Eastbourne Town	19	3	6	10	-11	15
20 Whitstable Town	18	4	1	13	-25	13
21 Ashford Town	16	2	5	9	-27	11
22 Chipstead	17	2	4	11	-20	10

KENT LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

1 Faversham Town	14	11	2	1	+25	35
2 Herne Bay	12	8	1	3	+10	25
3 Erith & Belvedere	13	8	0	5	+2	24
4 Sevenoaks Town	13	6	3	4	+5	21
5 Hythe Town	11	5	4	2	+16	19
6 Beckenham Town	12	6	1	5	+8	19
7 Tunbridge Wells	14	4	7	3	+3	19
8 Erith Town	11	5	3	3	+7	18
9 Greenwich Borough	13	5	3	5	-1	18
10 Deal Town	12	4	4	4	-4	16
11 Sporting Bengal Utd	12	4	2	6	-13	14
12 Norton Sports	11	4	1	6	-2	13
13 Holmesdale	13	4	1	8	-5	13
14 Fisher	15	3	2	10	-18	11
15 Corinthian	11	2	3	6	-12	9
16 Lordswood	11	0	3	8	-21	3

FIXTURES (Saturday): Ryman Division One South: Sittingbourne v Fleet Town; Kent Senior Trophy second round: Deal Town v Norton Sports; Hythe Town v Faversham Town

Patched up Bourne fail to make advantage pay

RUGBY

Sittingbourne 10 Old Olavians 10

SITTINGBOURNE were forced to settle for a draw against lowly Old Olavians in Kent 1 as the weather and player unavailability conspired against them on Saturday.

The game, originally scheduled as a home fixture for Olavians, was switched to Sittingbourne with the hosts' pitch waterlogged, and there was then a change of pitch with Bourne's first choice surface also deemed unplayable.

Vice-captain Chris Nutley said the change of venue had played into their opponents' hands but, with the players at Bourne's disposal, he had to take the positives from the performance.

He said: "We had 14 players unavailable – virtually a full team. We had to bring in a few people at the last minute so they were unprepared. The game itself was very touch-and-go, it was close all the way through and the smaller pitch didn't suit our fast wingers.

"On a different day, in different conditions, we would have won although we did have our chances – we did miss five kicks at goal. Even with the players we did have out, we thought we had enough strength to get a result."

A Mark Penney penalty set Sittingbourne on their way before Olavians scored a converted try to take a 7-3 lead. Dean Gaunt then went over for the home side and Penney slotted the conversion to secure a point for Bourne.



Picture: DAVID HICKS

ALL SQUARE: Sittingbourne fielded an understrength team in their draw against Old Olavians

Just one point separates the five sides immediately below leaders Dartfordians, and with the other four contenders all playing each other this weekend, Sittingbourne can make ground with a win at home to Ashford.

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Mark Stimson explains why the next few weeks could be crucial to his side's season



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